



Nebraska History posts materials online for your personal use. Please remember that the contents of *Nebraska History* are copyrighted by the Nebraska State Historical Society (except for materials credited to other institutions). The NSHS retains its copyrights even to materials it posts on the web.

For permission to re-use materials or for photo ordering information, please see:

<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/magazine/permission.htm>

Nebraska State Historical Society members receive four issues of *Nebraska History* and four issues of *Nebraska History News* annually. For membership information, see:

<http://nebraskahistory.org/admin/members/index.htm>

Article Title: Letters of Caroline Frey Winne from Sidney Barracks and Fort McPherson, Nebraska, 1874-1878

Full Citation: Thomas R Buecker, ed., "Letters of Caroline Frey Winne from Sidney Barracks and Fort McPherson, Nebraska, 1874-1878," *Nebraska History* 62 (1981): 1-46

URL of article: <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/full-text/NH1981CFWinne.pdf>

Date: 7/18/2014

Article Summary: Caroline Winne's Nebraska letters to her family in New York state describe frontier life, Army routines, and interactions with Indians. She often mentions the boredom of post life and the monotonous meals available to soldiers and their families.

Cataloging Information:

Names: Caroline Frey Winne, Charles Knickerbacker Winne, Ludlow Frey, Della Frey, John Frey, Grotius R Giddings, Edward O C Ord, George Crook, Mrs Deane Monahan, William Hawley, Old Man Afraid of His Horses, Sitting Bull, Young Man Afraid of His Horses, Two Lances, Big Ribs, George A Custer, Spotted Tail, Crazy Horse, Samuel S Sumner, Curtis Emerson Munn, Eugene Carr, Mrs Carr

Place Names: Sidney Barracks and Fort McPherson, Nebraska; Black Hills, Dakota Territory

Keywords: Caroline Frey Winne, Charles Knickerbacker Winne, Edward O C Ord, George Crook, Mrs Deane Monahan, George A Custer, Mrs Eugene Carr

Photographs / Images: Caroline Frey Winne; sketch of Sidney in 1876 by Lieutenant J E Foster; Dr Charles K Winne; officers' quarters No. 4, Sidney Barracks, January 1875 (gatefold drawing adapted by the author from original by Caroline Winne); plan of Sidney Barracks, 1875; Company G, 21st Infantry, in front of Fort Sidney barracks, 1885; Fort Sidney parade ground, 1884; officers' quarters at Fort McPherson during the 1870s



Caroline Frey Winne. Courtesy New-York Historical Society.

Letters of Caroline Frey Winne from Sidney Barracks and Fort McPherson, Nebraska, 1874-1878

EDITED BY THOMAS R. BUECKER

INTRODUCTION

Caroline Frey Winne was the wife of US Army surgeon Charles Knickerbacker Winne, who was stationed in the Department of the Platte from late 1874 to May, 1880, at Sidney Barracks and Fort McPherson, Nebraska, and at Fort Washakie, Wyoming Territory. While at those posts, Mrs. Winne wrote letters to her family in New York state--as often as once a week to her father, her sister Della, but principally to her brother, Ludlow. Her candid observations on life in Nebraska, on the Army, and on the Indian problem reveal the attitudes of a cultured, Eastern lady getting acquainted with life in the frontier West and on Army posts. Of particular interest to Nebraskans is the information she gives on Sidney Barracks and the town of Sidney during the years they were stationed there.

Caroline Frey was born on July 8, 1841, at Palatine Bridge, New York, to John Frey and Caroline Ludlow. In 1861 she was married to Major Grotius R. Giddings. During the Civil War Giddings served with the 14th US Infantry Regiment and was breveted for services at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. When the war was over, he remained in the Army and died in June of 1867 while serving as lieutenant colonel of the 16th US Infantry Regiment. Seven years later Caroline Giddings married Surgeon Winne. After the doctor's retirement in 1902, they returned to New York state. Caroline Winne died in Albany, New York, on October 14, 1922, three years after Winne's death.

Winne's career is typical of that of Army surgeons who served in the Civil War and in the era of the Indian Wars. Winne was born in Buffalo, New York, on June 30, 1838. After attending

medical school, he was appointed an assistant surgeon, US Army, in August, 1861. During the war he served in various capacities as a surgeon and supervisor of military hospitals. He received the brevet rank of captain "for faithful and meritorious services" in 1863, and was breveted to major and lieutenant colonel in 1865.¹ The latter brevet was given for distinguished services while in charge of the Tybee Island Quarantine Hospital in Georgia, where cholera was rampant. After the war Winne served as surgeon at Oglethorpe Barracks in Savannah until 1868 when he took a leave of absence to travel in Europe. He served as post surgeon at Fort Ripley, Minnesota, and at Fort Shaw, Montana, until he resigned in October, 1873. During the period he was a civilian he married Caroline Frey. He returned to the Army in 1874, and was stationed at Sidney Barracks, western Nebraska, in the Department of the Platte. In 1880 Winne was promoted to surgeon and served in the Department of the East till 1883, when he was transferred to California posts at Angel Island and Benicia. Four years later he returned to the East at Fort Wadsworth, New York Harbor. Following tours of duty at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, and Fort Crook, Nebraska, he retired in June, 1902, a lieutenant colonel (deputy surgeon general) after almost 40 years service in the Medical Department.

Sidney Barracks was originally established in December, 1867, when troops arrived to guard the railroad station and the other small stations along the newly built Union Pacific Railroad. It was a sub-post of Fort Sedgwick, Colorado, some 40 miles southeast of Sidney. At this time many Indians passed through western Nebraska to hunt in the South Platte and Republican Valleys. Most bands were friendly, but a few committed depredations. Originally Sidney Barracks was a temporary station, but in 1869 it was recommended that the post be enlarged and that the Fort Sedgwick garrison be moved there, making it a two company post. Substantial building improvements were made and troops from the post scouted for hostile Indians. In November, 1870, Sidney Barracks was established as an independent post.

The post was situated about 400 yards east of the Sidney railroad depot between the Union Pacific tracks on the north and Lodge Pole Creek on the south. The buildings were arranged on the west side of a 1-mile-square reservation adjacent to the town. In the spring of 1871, Fort Sedgwick was abandoned, and lumber and other materials were salvaged and moved to Sidney along

with the garrison. In 1874 it was determined to establish additional military posts near the Indian agencies in north-western Nebraska. A company of cavalry marked a supply road north from Sidney to the agencies. Troops from the post served as guards for freight outfits making their way north. During the Sioux War of 1876, Sidney Barracks was stripped of its cavalry garrison, and the troops sent north to serve in that campaign.

The discovery of gold in the Black Hills in 1874 brought a period of boom and excitement to Sidney. As the railroad town nearest the Hills, Sidney became a major departure point for men and supplies bound for the gold fields. With a floating population of bull-whackers, gamblers, gold seekers, border desperadoes, prostitutes, and with more than 40 liquor outlets, shootings and other criminal acts were regular occurrences. The chaos and wicked lifestyle in the town led Mrs. Winne to write her brother that she would not live in Sidney for the wealth of the state. Yet, her quarters on officers' row were less than 400 yards from the center of activity on Front Street.

After three years at Sidney Barracks, Charles Winne was unexpectedly transferred to Fort McPherson, some 140 miles east of Sidney. Although Caroline worried about moving during the winter with a new baby, the Winnes were soon satisfied with life at Fort McPherson. They had comfortable quarters and the doctor moved into a larger hospital. While at the post, they became friends with Major and Mrs. Eugene A. Carr, well known for his successful 1869 campaign against the Indians in the Republican Valley.

Duty at Fort McPherson was short for the Winnes. They resided there only two and one-half months before Winne went on sick leave in February, 1878, because of increasing problems with his eyes, an infirmity often mentioned by Mrs. Winne. They returned to the East, and several months later he was granted a one-year leave of absence. Dr. Winne returned to duty in May, 1879, at Fort Washakie, Wyoming Territory. Medical officers in the Indian War period were often rotated in four-year cycles from department to department, and Winne had one more year to serve in the Department of the Platte. In May, 1880, he was transferred to Fort Brady, Michigan, his service on the Plains finally finished.

Between 1874 and 1880 Caroline Winne wrote 138 letters from the Department of the Platte--75 from Sidney Barracks and 7

from Fort McPherson. The remainder were sent from Fort Washakie. Unless otherwise noted all letters herein published were by Mrs. Winne from Sidney Barracks. With her letters are 12 telegrams and postcards from Charles Winne to his wife's father and brother during November, 1875, when Caroline suffered severe complications in childbirth, resulting in the loss of the child and her own near death. In September, 1877, letters from Charles announced the birth of their son, Charles Jr.

Caroline Winne's spelling and style have been retained except for slight punctuation changes to aid the reader. Omitted from the letters are details of her family and Eastern social matters in order that emphasis may be laid on her views of frontier Army life in Nebraska in the 1870s. The entire collection of letters is held by the New-York Historical Society, New York City.

THE LETTERS

November 16, 1874

Palatine Bridge, New York

*[Letter from Caroline Winne to her father, John Frey]*² I thought before this I should have written to you to come up again--but as usual at Washington there seems to be a delay. The orders may come through any day though, so you and all must be ready. . . . Since writing this I have a letter from the Dr. His appointment has come and orders will follow, probably on Saturday or the first of next week. Will let you know at once of course.

December 23, 1874

Sidney Barracks, Nebraska

[To Brother & Sister] Here we are at last at the end of our long journey. We left Omaha a little behind yesterday, but made it up on the way, so we arrived at this place at 7:40 this morning. General Ord³ told me in Omaha that the climate here was good--in fact, he said "there is a great deal of climate." Climate and a railroad is about all there is and I think he is right. The place is but little and the country is perfectly barren prairie, a little rolling and rocky. We have a comfortable room at what is both the hotel and RR eating house of this place. And have just had a very good dinner (first rate squash pie).

We have a set of quarters assigned to us, not yet quite finished but they will be in a few days--a nice little house with hall & parlor & bedroom & dining room & kitchen--with closets off of bedroom &

dining room. A grate in the parlor & also in dining room, with stove in bedroom. These rooms all connect. The house fronts the east, & we have the south side. There are two houses alike under one roof. There is to be a porch in front of the house. There is a back stairs & room over the kitchen for servants and over the front of the house two bedrooms with dormer windows. I will send you a little plan of the house when we get in it. We shall have the rooms measured and send for our carpet today.

There are two ^[William] companies of cavalry stationed here under the command of Capt. Hawley.⁴ He is a widower, but Mr. Morton,⁵ the post adjutant, is married. These are the only officers I have seen except for Dr. Flint,⁶ an Acting Assistant Surgeon whom Charlie relieves. They are very pleasant gentlemanly men, and I hope the rest with all the ladies will be agreeable. We shall stay here until tomorrow and then go to the barracks and take a vacant room in one of the other houses until our quarters are ready, taking our meals here. It is only a little walk—not much if any further than to Mrs. Fenner's.⁷ It will be much better to be on hand. I shall get more little things done about the house. I think our little house will be just as cozy and pretty as possible. The rooms are good size, and we shall be very happy.

I have two or three on the look out for a servant and hope to have a colored woman. My cold is better and I am not tired. Charlie is well and has a good appetite; he eats more on one day than he used to in a week, for no other cause, I believe, than that he is happy and free from worry and care. I believe his last worry vanished this morning when he was told that sick call was not till a quarter of eight our time here, one hour and 56 minutes behind your time. . . .

The day before I came away, Genl. Ord, commanding the Dept., called on me. He is an oddity. He is quite an old man, I guess. Anyway his hair and beard are very gray—the roughest, most shabby looking man you ever saw. He had on a faded old plaid flannel shirt & a suit of plaid gray clothes that I should think might have been made for him when he was a school boy & wore ever since. An old light-colored felt hat with fur ear caps, but he was very cordial & friendly and seemed a jolly sort of man. . . .

Charlie has gone over to the barracks to see what he can get done. When he comes I will add our exact address for this place. There is one train each way a day—going west at 7:40 AM and going east at 7:40 PM, taking breakfast and supper here. They stop 35 minutes. . . .

I wish you would send this letter on to father. There is no use in my writing the same thing over.

January 6, 1875

[To Father] The Dr. was called up about two o'clock this morning to go over to town to see a sick man. Then the wind was blowing hard; but for

a long fur coat and good fur cap which he has he would have frozen. There is no physician in this place, so the post surgeon has to go, of course, when anyone wants him. It is very nice, of course, to have the outside practice & may pay very well. Only it would be pleasanter to have them come in the day time in weather as this.

This is terrible weather to camp out on these prairies, but a company from this post are ordered out tomorrow down the road about one hundred miles to look after some reported Indian trouble. They expect to be gone about two weeks with only tents to cover them and no stable for their horses of course: It is dreadful & probably perfectly useless. So many of these reports of Indian depredations are entirely without foundation, often times gotten up by someone who has corn to sell, & a company of cavalry coming into the neighborhood is a good thing for them.

Charlie has just come in, & to give you some idea of how cold it was last night (-26°), he says a large bulldog belonging to one of the officers froze to death. There were two of them together in a doghouse built between other sheds and coal houses so that it was protected from the wind & full of hay, and still this poor beast was dead this morning. The other one was so stiff they had to carry him in the house to thaw out. But we don't feel the cold unless we have to go out. The quarters are warm and Uncle Sam gives us quantities of the very best coal.

We are not settled yet. It seems a long time to you all. It does to us, I suppose, but the new house is not ready, & we have moreover decided not to take it. One of the officers is ordered away to join his company at Spotted Tail Agency,⁸ & we will take his house. It is not quite as large but large enough & in good repair inside and out. I have engaged a good colored servant—good cook and washer, so I shall be very comfortable. . . .

You must all write when you can. Letters are a blessing out here.

January 22, 1875

[To Ludlow] I think you would enjoy it. It is a rather God forsaken place out here. It would all be so new to you. The prairie is not perfectly flat right about here. There are queer looking flat top hills, which look as though they might have been islands some day, and in the summer when everything is green, it would look very pretty and pleasant all about.

I wish Della was here now. There are lots of Indians in town returning from their hunt which has been very unsuccessful,⁹ and besides the Utes stole about 250 of their best ponies. They are the most horrible looking creatures I ever saw. Mrs. Monahan¹⁰ and I went to one of the little stores the other day and there were about half dozen of those noble savages dressed in buffalo skins and red blankets with beads and feathers & all sorts of tin ornaments. Their faces painted, some in daubs

& some bright red all over. Each with his gun and bow & arrows. I believe I should have turned and run home, but Mrs. Monahan has lived so much in New Mexico and Arizona, she has lost all fear of them. So she answered their "How," which is more of a grunt than a spoken word. But I tell you I was glad to get out. There was a great many about that day, men, women, and children.

That same afternoon Charlie and I were out on the porch when we saw six of them come streaming out of Capt. Hawley's quarters & up toward our house. I stood my ground to see what they would do, in mortal fear that they would all want to shake hands, but they passed by. One was a chief Red Fly.¹¹ He nodded & said, "how be you Dr.?" They are dreadful beggars and come to the post for bread. This is not a good time to get things of them. The squaws have been employed in tanning skins instead of fancy work. Parties coming from the reservations have the things we want to get.

I have just been out for a little walk with Charlie. There are ten Indians waiting on the porch in front of Capt. Hawley's quarters now. His house and the one we are to have are together so I have had enough of them staring in my windows too I suppose. I have no doubt the Captain is in the house now, but he is forbidden to give them rations, and if you give to one party from your own pocket, there is no end to it. They will come every day, and if you let them in the house they won't go out till they have something to eat.

Sunday—This is a glorious day, so clear & bright and warm too. How I wish there was a church here and a good minister. This I miss more than anything else. There is so little to mark Sunday different from any other day, but we are thankful for so pleasant a home. The garrison is full of Indians today, squaws with their papooses on their backs & children of all sizes and colors. Yellow faced ones in green blankets & red ones in blue blankets & robes. They stand around on the piazzas and stare in the windows. Charlie met a great chief out on the parade ground this morning with one of the officers, who was introduced to him as Two Lances,¹² but the chief looks no better than the others. There is a camp of twenty or thirty lodges about one mile east of us. They are tanning skins, and have had some very fine ones I believe. I mean to go over & see them if I can get a chance to ride, but I am too afraid of them to go on foot.

January 31, 1875

(In our own house)

[*To Ludlow*] We are at last, I am happy to say, in our own little house, of which I enclose a rough plan. It is a little box, but large enough and really cozy & pretty. You can perhaps imagine how it all looks from the little plan. We like it and are just as happy as we can be. I have a very good woman in the kitchen, and we shall be very comfortable for the

time we have to stay out here. I do so wish you and Della could come out and see us. That's the dreadful part of being away off so far.

If Charlie continues to have as much practice outside as he has so far, he will make a very nice thing out of Sidney. He has so far \$163 charged, some of it paid and all good. That isn't bad for five weeks. He lost one patient last week. An old man seventy years old came over to the post one morning in a cart & was thrown out in some way; broke nine of his ribs. Charlie bound him up and did all he could for him, but he only lived two days. Poor old man. It was a sad end of such a long life. The old man died, but his brother is good for \$40.

The Indians have all taken their departure much to my delight. It was not pleasant to say the least. To look up and find your windows darkened by "Lo"¹³ and his brothers & wives & children. Their dirty painted faces pressed close to the glass. They are poor miserable creatures. It would be a great mercy to them if they could all freeze to death, as many of them have this winter. . . .

We like this house,¹⁴ I think, better than we would the new ones because the fences and out buildings are all up and it is in excellent repair. Newly painted and calkimined in the fall and all white walls. It really is very pretty inside.

January 31, 1875

[To Father] We are at last settled in our house—a little box of a thing but really cozy and pretty. We have a pretty little parlor with bedroom back, & opening out of it a nice good sized dining room. And still back of this the kitchen—then upstairs two rooms & two closets. We have a colored woman in the kitchen and are very content & happy. The only drawback to it all is that we are far away from you all. If you could come and see us even once a year for a nice visit, it would be pleasant. Still we are on the RR and get a mail every day, which is a great deal.

This certainly is a very pleasant post and pleasant people. They have all been very kind to us. One lady in particular really has taught me how to live out here. She has lived on the frontier a good many years in this Dept—for two or three years & knows just when to send for things. We have to send to Fremont, almost three hundred miles, for all our butter, eggs and poultry. At least that's the best place & there we do send. Some things we get at Cheyenne. It requires considerable engineering to run a house and keep oneself supplied with everything. Things are pretty cheap though. Chickens are ten cents a pound. Turkey 14 cents, butter 25 & eggs 25 a dozen. Vegetables trouble us more than anything. Potatoes are scarce and mostly frozen, and for other things we have to eat canned things from the commissary. We get passably good beef, some days very good, supplied by contract to the garrison for 6¼ cents a pound, but no mutton at all, and seldom any veal. They say venison and

antelope are not so plentiful here as we expected to find and no small game. Thus we manage to live very well.

We have had a great many Indians at the post lately. There is a camp of nine or a dozen lodges about a mile from here—some of Red Cloud's¹⁵ band. They are always hungry you know, no matter if they have just eaten ten pounds of buffalo meat & a roast dog. They are a dirty, worthless set, and it was anything but pleasant to have the windows darkened by the painted faces of "ye noble savage" pressed close to the glass. We were all heartily glad when they broke camp & moved.

Tell little Carrie that I have her nice letter, which I certainly will answer, and tell her about some funny looking little Indians I have seen. I am trying to get the children some little bags or some things in Indian work. I got one, but it has been used & is too dirty. Charlie says to tell you he is making his fortune out here—on paper. He has really had a good deal of outside practice so far. He has \$163 charged—about \$40 of it paid, and all of it good. We shall undoubtedly come east with a large fortune:

February 13, 1875

[*To Ludlow*] You will I fear tire of my Indian letters, but the window as I write is darkened by a red brother in a soldier's overcoat, light blue so becoming. "Old Man Afraid of His Horses"¹⁶ just looked in and greeted me with the usual "How." (I had the honor of shaking hands with the old man yesterday.) It seems more like "hough"! spoken very short, like kind of a grunt. The old man had the handsomest pipe I ever saw, a red stone pipe, but so large and beautifully polished. Charlie tried to get it yesterday & the interpreter still thinks he may get it. The great chiefs of the tribe joined him yesterday. Had a talk with Capt. Hawley on the piazza. Capt. & Mrs. Monahan & Charlie & I were also present, and it was very curious to me.

There was Sitting Bull,¹⁷ the greatest chief; and Young Man Afraid of His Horses,¹⁸ the next in power; American Horse,¹⁹ and some other of their kin, I don't know whether all chiefs or not. They wanted, of course, first of all something to eat, and then wanted to tell the capt. of the troubles at the buffalo camp. Some of the chiefs & their bands, Little Wound²⁰ & Two Lances, have been killing cattle and making trouble with the ranchmen down there, and these chiefs—Sitting Bull in particular—had interfered and killed some of those bad Indians & made them give back the things they had taken.

And now they were going back to the agency so that if there was more trouble they would not be blamed for it. They had killed so few buffalo they had but little to eat, & their squaws and papooses were hungry, and then they wanted something for them to eat. Capt. Hawley told them he appreciated all they had done and that they were good Indians & had

kept their people quiet and good, and he would like to give them food for all their bands, but the Great Father at Washington had forbid it. He only sent stores here for the soldiers. Their place to get food was at their agency.

During all of this they had sat quietly on the floor smoking & passing the pipe from one to the other. But Sitting Bull now arose majestically and shook hands with all the officers & proceeded to speak. He said he knew that the chief would give him food if he could. What he wanted to say was, would he not give it to them & let it be taken from their supplies at the agency? He was in great haste to get back to the agency, but he had no food for his people & his little children. Then the poor Capt. had to go through all his reasons again. Told them that the Great Father at Washington sent just enough for the soldiers here, & a different chief serving under the Great Father & Washington sent the food for them. But he told them he himself and the other officers would make them a present of enough for their little children. Just their two lodges. So after one or two more approaches from the others, all to the same purpose, they shook hands again & proceeded to the commissary with the officers to get their stuff.

The interpreter was a negro, an acquaintance of my girl. Through him we tried to get the pipe and may still, and I asked him to get me the earrings Sitting Bull wore and tell him because he was so great a chief I wanted them. He looked first fondly at his food, then at me and said to tell the lady he would study about it. I had no hope of getting them, but this morning to my surprise he came & brought me one of them. I wish you could see it, and perhaps I will send it to you to look at and keep for me when we send the pipe. Charlie has a red stone pipe for you and is trying to get you a tomahawk pipe. He has one and will send one to you. I didn't get the earring. It was a large hoop. This is the pendant & is larger than this sheet of paper a great deal, and is really a great curiosity as being worn by the great Chief Sitting Bull too. He did not like to part with it, but the interpreter promised to get him another. . . .

There is another good Indian here this morning, Big Ribs.²¹ He could talk some English. I do pity these poor wretches, for all they are so deceitful. There are some good ones—those who have done good service to the whites. And there is no doubt they are dreadfully imposed upon and cheated by the Indian agents and traders. They don't get half that the Govt. sends them, and they are poor as poverty itself. . . .

How I wish you could come and see us. You don't even say you think our little house must be pretty when I took all the pains to send you a diagram of the little mansion. It is very pretty anyway, and we do enjoy it very much.

February 27, 1875

[To Ludlow] What dreadful weather you do have this winter. You better

come and live in Sidney. Here it [is] as Genl. Ord said, "a great deal of climate." Here today it has been just lovely. . . .

Thanks for the recipe, but since sending for it I have found that I can't get any graham flour. I was amused at your wondering what we have good to eat. This is the worst place in the world—I was going to say—but not quite as bad as that, I guess, to get anything to eat. I haven't seen a fresh vegetable since I came here, except for potatoes. Those we get, very good Utah potatoes for 4 cents a pound. We all send to Fremont about 300 miles away for our poultry, butter & eggs. I got a box this week very nice turkeys for 15 cts a lb., chicken (old) 10 cts, good butter 25 cts., but no eggs in there marked at any price. So I manage to get a few here for 50 cents a dozen. We get very nice canned vegetables and fruits from the commissary, and also flour, sugar, tea & coffee and all our groceries.

The beef is furnished by contract to the troops and officers at 6¼ cents, but such beef! Occasionally a passable piece, but very seldom of course, all the poor animal gets to eat is what it can pick of this one prairie grass. They haven't killed a calf here since we came to the post, & mutton or lamb is unknown. The game laws have been in force for a good while—so no venison or any wild meat. We shall however be able to get fresh California vegetables by sending to Cheyenne. And in the summer we shall have gardens here if the grasshoppers will leave them alone. If they come again we will all have to put in a plea for \$1 subscriptions. One of the officers from here is out on grasshopper duty—much to his disgust.²² What won't they put army officers at next. No doubt there was a great deal of suffering caused by these pests, but the greatest losses will not get the most relief. Many a man will be far better off than ever he was before. . . .

Time slips very rapidly by. I can't realize that this is the last day of winter, although it is equally hard to realize that we have been married only three months. We feel so much at home and quite like old settlers in Sidney. So many houses have gone up since we came here. For my part I can't imagine what the people all live on. . . .

We have almost exhausted our small stock of books, but Charlie is reading aloud to me now a very interesting book, "Primitive Cultures." We are very much interested in it. . . . No more Indians anymore.

March 1, 1875

[To Father] There is but little of interest to tell here anyway. It is a very quiet monotonous life. The days pass quickly, but when night comes there has nothing happened to tell of. We don't even have any Indians anymore, and I am glad of it. At first they were a novelty to me and it amused me to watch them, but they are a very uninteresting race, and a great nuisance hanging about a post. They are dreadfully dirty. . . .

This is certainly a fine climate but the trouble is, as Genl. Ord said,

that's all there is. I wish we could be with you all in New York for a little while this spring, but it is too long a journey to take very often. Time flies so fast, though it won't be long before we come to stay, and in the meantime we are thankful for so pleasant a station. We could not find a pleasanter garrison and nicer quarters anywhere.

March 7, 1875

[*To Ludlow*] I pity you people who live in such a cold climate. Here it is sunny and pleasant all the time. There has been a high wind today, but warm. I think Sidney must be within that warm belt that there is much said about. . . .

I envy you. Your beautiful flowers, and still more will envy you for your trees in the summer & spring. This must be one of the hottest places north of the equator, and there isn't a tree anywhere about as large as one of the small maples in the front yard, and what are were entirely stripped of leaves in about twenty minutes by the grasshoppers last summer from all I can gather. I think I prefer Sidney in the winter.

March 14, 1875

[*To Ludlow*] Your winter is coming this way. The ground is white with snow this morning & it is much colder than for several weeks past. The past week had been a very disagreeable one. So very windy—a perfect cloud of dust all the time. You have no idea of it. This is the worst place to keep clean in I ever knew, in fact it is just an impossibility. . . .

There has been a change in Dept. commanders, General Crook²³ having orders to relieve Genl. Ord, who goes to Texas. General C. is a great Indian man—has been very successful in Arizona, and probably for that reason as much as any comes here, for there can be but trouble with the Sioux if those miners don't keep away from the Black Hills.²⁴ The expectation is that this post will be enlarged & probably made the Hdqts. of the 3rd Cavalry. Still no one knows anything about it. It is astonishing how many rumors are all the time flying about at a post. . . .

There is a great scarcity of news or anything to write about. There is no life in the world more monotonous than that at a military post on the plains. . . .

March 23, 1875

[*To Ludlow*] We are going to have peas and new potatoes for dinner—not, however, I am sorry to say, the products of Nebraska. One of the officers received a box from a son in California this morning. His wife very kindly sent me a pan of things, some peas, potatoes, asparagus, pie plant and radishes, all very nice. And they are a treat. We are so tired of canned stuff. It is worse here than east because we can't get a bunch of

cabbage to mix up and make a change once in a while. Of course everything is stale. Never any kind of fresh meat except poor beef.

April 21, 1875

[To Ludlow] We are really quite homesick, both of us. I suppose it is useless to hope to be ordered east as soon as then, but a leave of absence is possible. . . .

I don't think I told you we are reduced to one company here. Capt. Hawley was ordered to Fort Laramie as part of the Black Hills expedition.²⁵ They have been gone over two weeks. There are only two companies of cavalry left along the whole line of the railroad now.²⁶ It is possible that there will be a company or two of infantry sent here anyway for the summer, but we don't know.

The weather has been a delight for sometime, & green grass begins to show. Yesterday we had a violent thunderstorm with hail and rain, but today it was beautiful again. . . .

I wish I had taken more lessons of Della in flower culture. We are going to try to have some flowers here this summer, but I don't expect to succeed. Only hearty things will grow here anyway.

May 6, 1875

[To Della] When I finished my letter to Ludlow last Saturday, I fully intended to write you the next day or Monday but couldn't. And now, first I will tell you my experiences this week in the servant question. I wrote Lud about the American sister of African descent from Cheyenne who was to come & didn't. Well, on Tuesday we heard from a letter that had been sent by a young man to his mother in Fremont on the subject, and he said mother wrote that she had engaged a girl, a plain girl, and a tidy, strong girl & a little deaf. Should he send her?

Of course we telegraphed to send her at once, & Charlie made arrangements for the 2nd time for a half fare ticket & she was to be here this morning, when yesterday P.M. to our great disgust a telegram came saying the girl could not be prevailed upon to come. This was a white girl. Well, Charlie was going to the hospital and met Capt. Monahan & stopped & told him about it, and the Capt. said there is a man over at my company quarters who came to me a little while ago begging for something to eat & a place to stay until he can get something to do. His story is that he is a discharged soldier of the 5th Cavalry and by profession a cook. So Charlie came home & told me, & we decided it would do no harm anyway to try the man till we could get a girl. So Capt. Monahan went himself and brought this man over.

He had a pitiful story to tell of how he lost his wife and four children and in despair enlisted and went to Arizona and was sick, then

discharged on Surgeon's certificate²⁷ & on his way from San Francisco had been robbed of \$300. He had always cooked in a hotel before he went in the army and could do anything. Was willing to sweep and clean and make himself useful about the house, always wanted to be busy. Well, I told him he might come this morning at nine o'clock, and we would try it a week. So he bid us a good evening and went away, and I hear took the eastward bound train about nine o'clock last night. Thats all!

Who wouldn't live in Nebraska, "The Garden of the West"? I have scouts out in all directions again, and live in hopes. If this man hadn't found anything to do, he would probably have stayed around here and lived at the co. table a month, all the time very anxious for work, but when he really had work offered then he was off. I am thankful he went before he ever was inside my house, for now I know he took nothing anyway.

You and Lud will be disgusted to know Charlie is in a state of white wrath. If I was strong, I could manage with my soldier,²⁸ but the stove heat and smells make me faint.

May 21, 1875

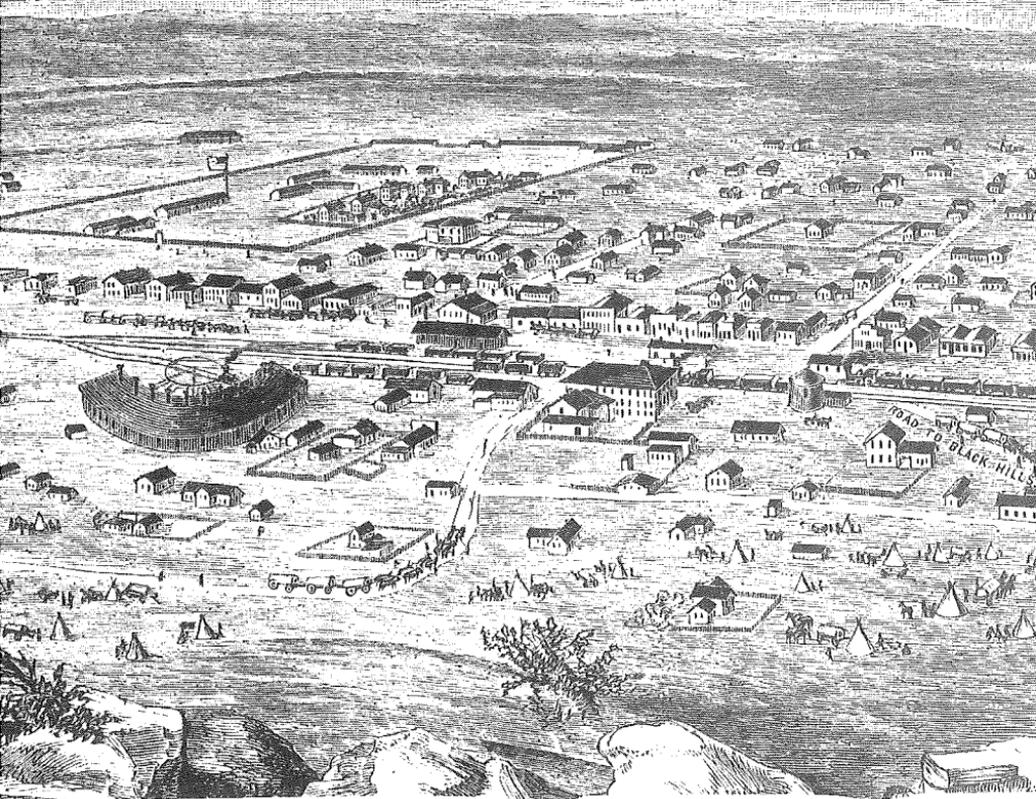
[To Father] I have no news to tell. We are very quiet here. I feel quite well again. Charlie is wonderfully well. The few little cottonwood trees we have are fast leafing out, and the prairies are quite green. Still it is a desolate country. I wonder anyone ever settles here.

July 25, 1875

[To Father] There has been an unusual amount of rain for this country, too. Last Monday we had a dreadful storm of rain and hail. It only lasted from 2 P.M. till half past three but there were four inches of water in that short time by actual measurement of the rain gauge at the hospital, and such a flood I never saw except when the ice breaks up in the river at home. This storm was confined to only a narrow belt of country a few miles east & west of us in less than an hour. All cellars here at the post and in town were full to overflowing and the water stood fourteen inches deep in the yards. For a dry country that was a good deal of rain we thought. . . .²⁹

What we miss more than anything out here are fruit & vegetables. The post gardens are a failure, and all the vegetables we get came from such a distance they are enormously high and not fresh at that. . . . The climate is pleasant and very healthful, no doubt, but that is all the country has to recommend it, and how anyone can live here from choice is a mystery to me. I shall be thankful when we can come east to stay.

We are both very well. I have at last succeeded in getting a girl. She is



Sketch of Sidney in 1876 by Lieutenant J. E. Foster. Sidney Barracks at upper left.



Dr. Charles K. Winne. Courtesy US Army Medical Museum.

very good—a colored woman. She has a child about five years old, but he is a bright, good little boy and no trouble.

August 8, 1875

[*To Ludlow*] And I, with you, live in the hope that the time is not many years distant when we shall live near together. You don't wish for it any more than we do; and you may rest assured we shall not stay in the army any longer than we are obligated. . . .

The leaf and flower I enclose is what they call here the wild cucumber. We all have it trained up at our porches, and it makes a beautiful shade. . . .

Charlie is pretty busy. He really has quite a nice little outside practice. Very little sickness, but all manner of fractures & kicks from mules and oxen & horses. And then he has had several railroad accidents, & these pay well. It is a great help, & probably he could not have a post anywhere where he would have had as much.

August 15, 1875

[*To Father*] It does seem a great while since we came away, and you may be sure we will come next year if it is a possible thing. And in the meantime I am very thankful to be in so pleasant & healthful place as this, for our little post is very pretty this summer. We have had so much rain in the past few days that the grass is very green and the trees have grown wonderfully, and the porches are all shaded with the wild cucumber vine. . . .

I hope you will have plenty of melons while you are home. I don't expect to see one. We do so miss fruit & vegetables here. We have a few vegetables in the garden, but fruit all comes from California. It is very high. Peaches 35 cts. and 40 cts. a lb., four and five in a lb.—grapes 35 cts., pears 20 cts. They will be cheaper I suppose after a while, & we shall have them sent down from Cheyenne and so avoid the Sidney merchants' profits. There is no reason why gardens should not succeed here if anyone understood the business, but no one here at the post does, and the citizens think only of raising cattle and selling whiskey—most of them. We had a visit from the grasshoppers too a week or so ago, who did damage especially to corn.

October 17, 1875

[*To Ludlow*] We felt quite sure at one time that there would be no changes here this fall, but there are to be. I suppose in a week or two there will be two more companies here, both fully officered, making, with the three now here & Charlie, ten officers, five of them married, and then one young lady, a sister of one of them, & four more children. So you see we

shall have quite a large garrison society & from all accounts a very pleasant one.³⁰

[In November Caroline Winne suffered severe complications in childbirth and lost her baby. Telegrams and post cards from Dr. Winne kept her family in New York informed of her condition.]

December 4, 1875

[Letter from Mrs. Winne to her father] Your letter of the 28th came this morning. I wish you could come in and see me now. You would be satisfied that I am getting well as fast as anyone can who has been very sick as I was. I sit up several hours every day and walk about the room by myself. This I did for the first time yesterday & found I really had more strength than I supposed I had. It did not tire me at all.

I know how you have suffered while I was so sick, not knowing for so long how it would end. And I thank God you all & my dear husband were spared the great sorrow you feared. I am, I believe, truly thankful for my spared life & pray it may be more truly devoted to the service of my heavenly father, who has shown such loving kindness to me. Charlie has indeed had a trying time; when my consciousness first returned, he looked so worn & tired. I have had one of the best of nurses, who is still with me & will stay until I am fully able to do everything for myself. But still Charlie, of course, has never thrown off one bit of care for one minute besides having a good many sick in the garrison.

If you haven't had as many letters as you have perhaps thought you might, you must remember how much Charlie has to do. Now I am able to write myself & will try to let you all hear twice a week how I am. We are invited out to dine on Christmas at Mrs. Monahan's, and Charlie thinks I will be well enough to go long before that, so you may know I am not very sick or weak now. I hope I shall. I do want to be well & like my old self once more. I hope now to go down stairs by the middle of next week surely.

It is a sad & bitter disappointment not to have my little baby. But it could not be & I try to feel "Thy will be done." . . .

December 5, 1875

[To Ludlow]. . . We could hardly believe on Friday (the 3rd) that we have been married only a year. Nor thankful enough that the year found us spared to each other. I was so near going away and leaving Charles. . . . I think he [Charles] will be glad to throw off the cares of housekeeping.

December 19, 1875

[To Ludlow] Your letter came today, and I hope you received mine so that

you could know of my steady improvements. I almost am as good as new again. I haven't been out doors yet, but Charlie has promised me I can go today. I have had a dress on these afternoons (a real dress, I mean, not a wrapper), and I really feel very well and able to take charge of my house again. My good nurse left me Thursday morning. She watched over me so closely & took real motherly care of me that I miss her sadly. I pity anyone who is sick enough to need constant & good care who can't have her—or one like her. I don't know what would have become of poor me if I hadn't had her. . . .

Gen'l. Ord was right when he said that there wasn't anything at Sidney but the climate, but there was a great deal of climate. I wish you could come & see us this winter. How you would enjoy it. A year seems such a long time to be away from you all. When I think, too, how much longer it may be before I see you, I cannot think of coming east without Charlie. And I have no idea he will be able to come until we are ordered east. Oh, how glad we both shall be when we can leave the army & so be our own masters, to live where we want to & go & come as we choose. . . .

Charlie's new set of Thackeray in 11 volumes came just as I began to get well. C. is reading "Henry Esmond" aloud to me. It is a delightful novel, I think. I am envious of your kitten. He must be a curiosity. I tried all this fall to get a kitten, but couldn't make one stay, and we are overrun with mice.

January 25, 1876

[*To Ludlow*] I have had all sorts of trouble with servants, and not being as strong of course yet as of old, it takes but little to tire me. The green Irish girl I spoke of came as she promised early Monday morning, and glad was I on Tuesday to send her off on Wednesday. She knew nothing, and I don't believe she ever will. She was worse than no one. I have a very good woman now, the wife of one of the trumpeters. She will be able to do my work for a time and has written to St. Louis for a sister to come out to me, & I guess she will come. They are daughters of an old soldier. If I can get this girl, she will be what I want. I wish I could see Della & tell her some of my servant experiences & the kind of girls I have had. It is different from hers, but she would be equally disgusted, and still it is laughable. I shall have some funny things to tell of my wild western life when I come home. . . .

Last week was pretty cold, but today is lovely again, bright & warm as May. This surely has been a wonderful winter. I am afraid we shall have no ice to store for next summer. There is none laid in here at the post, and anything brought from away over this RR costs so much. . . .

Charlie was saying he should think you would raise mushrooms. He is very fond of them. We have them, very nice—the little French mushrooms, canned. We get them from the commissary, & they are one of the very few canned vegetables that Charlie likes at all. . . .

There is no news to write. We don't have any Indians this winter. They are not allowed to hunt down on the South Platte any more, so nothing to bring them this way.³¹

January 30, 1876

[*To Ludlow*] I suppose you have heard one or two of Mr. Williams'³² good sermons today. Oh how I wish I could hear him again. It is a very great privation to have no church at all to go to. Just think, I haven't been inside of a church or heard a sermon since I left home. I hope it won't be necessary for us to live in such a heathen land very many years. If there ever was a place where missionary work was needed, it is in this same town of Sidney. I don't believe there is so utterly bad a place in the whole United States. Nothing but whiskey & vice & wickedness. I wouldn't live in Sidney for the wealth of the whole state. . . .

Servants ought to obey their masters in this primitive state of Nebraska—but servants don't. They are just as high & mighty & independent here as with you. I have heard of my good Fanny (& really if she wouldn't drink so, I never would ask for a better servant) in jail two or three times lately. I fear she is past redemption. Poor girl. It is too bad. She is a nice cook & a most beautiful washer & ironer as I ever saw. . . .

I am feeling quite well, and the winter is slipping fast away. Tomorrow is the last of the month, as we are reminded by the order for "monthly inspection tomorrow A.M. at 9 o'clock in full dress."³³

January 30, 1876

[*To Father*] I have very good help in my kitchen now, and think I shall be able to keep this woman, anyway until I am really strong again. I don't understand why it should be so much more difficult than it used to be to get good servants, but such is undoubtedly the fact. There are plenty of worthless ones, but good or bad, they all want the same high wages. . . .

Of course we, neither of us, like this life, but it doesn't seem best to resign again until we see an opening somewhere that will give us a living in civil practice. It takes so long for a physician to build up a practice. . . .

You must not feel troubled about us at all. We have many privations of society and all church privileges, but as I said, we have a happy home and every necessary comfort in it. Here our lot seems to be cast for the present, and until we can see our way plainly to a change for the better, we both try to be content and make the best of everything. I certainly have one of the kindest, best husbands in the world.

March 11, 1876

[*To Father*] Our life as you know is so perfectly monotonous and quiet.

Still the time flies perhaps faster to us from the fact that one day is so exactly like another. . . .

We think there is hardly a possibility that Charlie will be sent out with any of the Indian expeditions this summer, but still he may, in which case I shall of course pack up everything to be left & come home. I couldn't stay here alone, and that's another bother about going on leave. We should have to pack everything just the same as tho we were sure of moving because someone else might be ordered here who would want this house. The Monahans boxed and stored everything because their company may change stations before they return. So you see going in on leave is attended with a great deal of labor as well as expense. I would very much like to see the Centennial exhibits but fear I shall not. . . .

April 16, 1876

[*To Ludlow*] G Company went out last night on a scout with seven day rations. Thirteen Indians were seen to cross the railroad about twenty miles above here heading toward the South Platte, and as this company started just twenty-four hours after, they will of course [not] catch them.³⁴ Oh what a farce it is. Come to get down to the facts of Crook's expedition,³⁵ the one hundred Indians killed amounted to just 4 killed, so some of the Indians who have come into the agency report. As there were four soldiers killed and eight wounded, some of whom have died, we failed to see the success—"but twas a famous victory."

April 30, 1876

[*To Della*] I wish every day for a peek into your green house and a chance at your lettuce and radishes. We are positively reduced to tough beef and potatoes. . . .

We have just had the worst dust storm I think we have now seen out here. It came up without the least warning & was just fearful for a while. It was impossible to see two rods out of the windows. The air was perfectly black with dust. We hoped it might be followed by a good hard rain, but there was only a sprinkle. The wind still blows a gale. Oh this is a charming climate. This hot wind seems to have scorched up what little green grass there was. If we could, how soon we would pack up our few worldly goods and emigrate east!

April 30, 1876

[*To Father*] It is a month I know since I received your letter, and I should have answered it long ago but for the perfect dearth of news or anything of interest to write about. There are all kinds of reports regarding the summer campaign against the Indians, but we know nothing for

certain. About all the reliable news we get comes in the New York paper. . . .

If you see Aunt Maria, tell her I have her letter and will write her soon, if only to say I am well as I am very well. I think I was never so entirely well in my life. I know I ought to be very thankful for this and many other mercies that I have, & I believe I am. But I do so want to get away from this God forsaken country and come east. We never are altogether content you know.

May 17, 1876

[*To Ludlow*] This spring is very backward with us too—not wet but such cold winds. Still the few trees we have are putting on their green coats, and the wild cucumber vines are growing nicely. We put up the strings along the porch for them yesterday.

All the companies of cavalry³⁶ left last Friday by rail for Medicine Bow from whence they will march to Ft. Fetterman.³⁷ We have two companies of the 23rd Infantry³⁸ here now. But as they have come only for the summer or while the cavalry are out, they have not brought their families. The officers are all very nice, pleasant gentlemen, but there are no ladies. So I am as much alone as ever. I miss Mrs. Monahan so much. They are in Philadelphia now. I hear often from her, as the Captain's company is in the field. He will, I suppose, come out in July to join it, & she will remain east till the company comes in the fall. . . .

I wish you would send. . . the two pictures Mary Grant gave me and Gus' photograph. If we have to stay out in this desolation, we might as well begin to have our household goods about us. . . .

My hens continue their industry. I have but 13 on duty now and got 60 eggs last week. Very few of the eggs I set, though, hatch, and what chickens I get serve chiefly to furnish late supper for the rats. I had a beautiful little brood, only six of them, but such healthy nice chickens, and a rat took just half of them this morning. I have eight new ones, but I don't count on raising them. My neighbor next door lost eighteen in one night. . . .

May 21, 1876

[*To Ludlow*] We are usual—painfully quiet. The Infantry Garrison is a peaceful one, not a man in the guard house nor one on sick report. Charlie says he is getting a good rest. He has had a busy time the past winter. There has been a good deal of sickness, some very severe cases of rheumatism but no deaths. One of the officers, Charlie's old friend Capt. Randall,³⁹ has been ordered to the field to take command of a band of Indians. Genl. Crook hoped to be able to get a band from the peaceful Indians at the agencies to fight against their wild brethren & force them to come in, but he could not. So I believe he has succeeded

in getting a band of Crows and Piutes [Paiutes] the deadly enemies of the Sioux.

The whole thing seems no more nor less than fearful wrong & willful murder to me. I am most sincerely thankful that Charlie did not have to go, for they will have a dreadful time in many ways, and all cannot come back. It was very sad to see them all go from here & seemed like old war times. I wish Genl. Crook had been left quietly in Arizona. He has just stirred up a hornets nest here for nothing.

June 4, 1876

[*To Ludlow*] There have not been as many flowers as last year I think. Anyway I have not found them, perhaps because there are such a troop of children here who pick every one as fast as it shows its head above the ground. . . . Send the pictures when you have time. I don't want you to put yourself out about it. We are having our house painted now, walls & all, and soldier painters work slow. This one particularly, as he is a cook⁴⁰ in the hospital & can only work a few hours in the afternoon. I won't slander him. He is a fast worker and a good one but don't have much time. . . .

Did I tell you Charlie saw Don Pedro⁴¹ on his return from San Francisco? He just happened to be up town one morning as the train from the west (in the morning before) came in. The emperor got off & walked about while the train stood at the station. So Charlie got a good look at him. Charlie so seldom goes to Sidney it seemed funny he should have happened to see him.

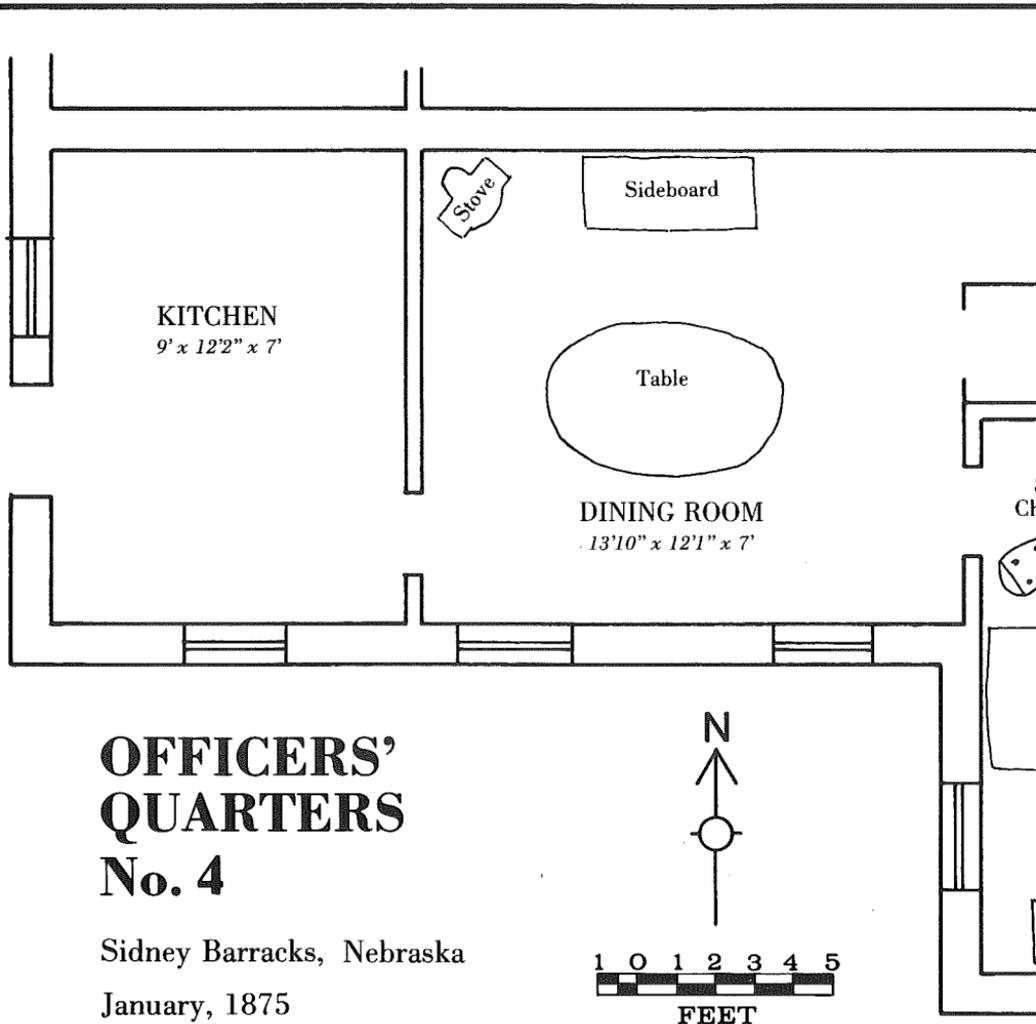
June 15, 1876

[*To Father*] I am thankful that Charlie did not have to go into the field this summer. That I am quite satisfied with Sidney Barracks. We hear nothing from the expedition. You will have whatever news there is as soon as we. All that is anyway reliable we get from the New York papers.

We have had a very cold spring and summer so far, so much cold wind. It makes very little difference though as far as vegetation is concerned, as no one tries to have a garden. Very nice vegetables can be grown here with pains, but every one is too lazy. Sidney people would rather live on beans & bacon and so have more time to loaf around the innumerable rum holes which constitute the town. And as the garrison was changed here this spring, there are no post gardens. We are obligated to send a long distance for what we need, and the express charges makes things very high! . . .

June 18, 1876

[*To Ludlow*] I would love to see the old place in its beautiful June dress,



**OFFICERS'
QUARTERS
No. 4**

Sidney Barracks, Nebraska
January, 1875



Drawing adapted by author from original by Caroline Winne. Officers' quarters number 4, occupied by the Winnes, was the south half of a frame, adobe bricklined duplex built in 1871. Captain Hawley occupied duplicate quarters number 3 to the north. Two upstairs bedrooms were probably not used by the Winnes.

Caroline's notes on the rooms and furnishings accompanied the drawing: (1) bracket shelf with clock and pictures (2) green-covered table with pictures, books, and inkstand (3) crimson-covered

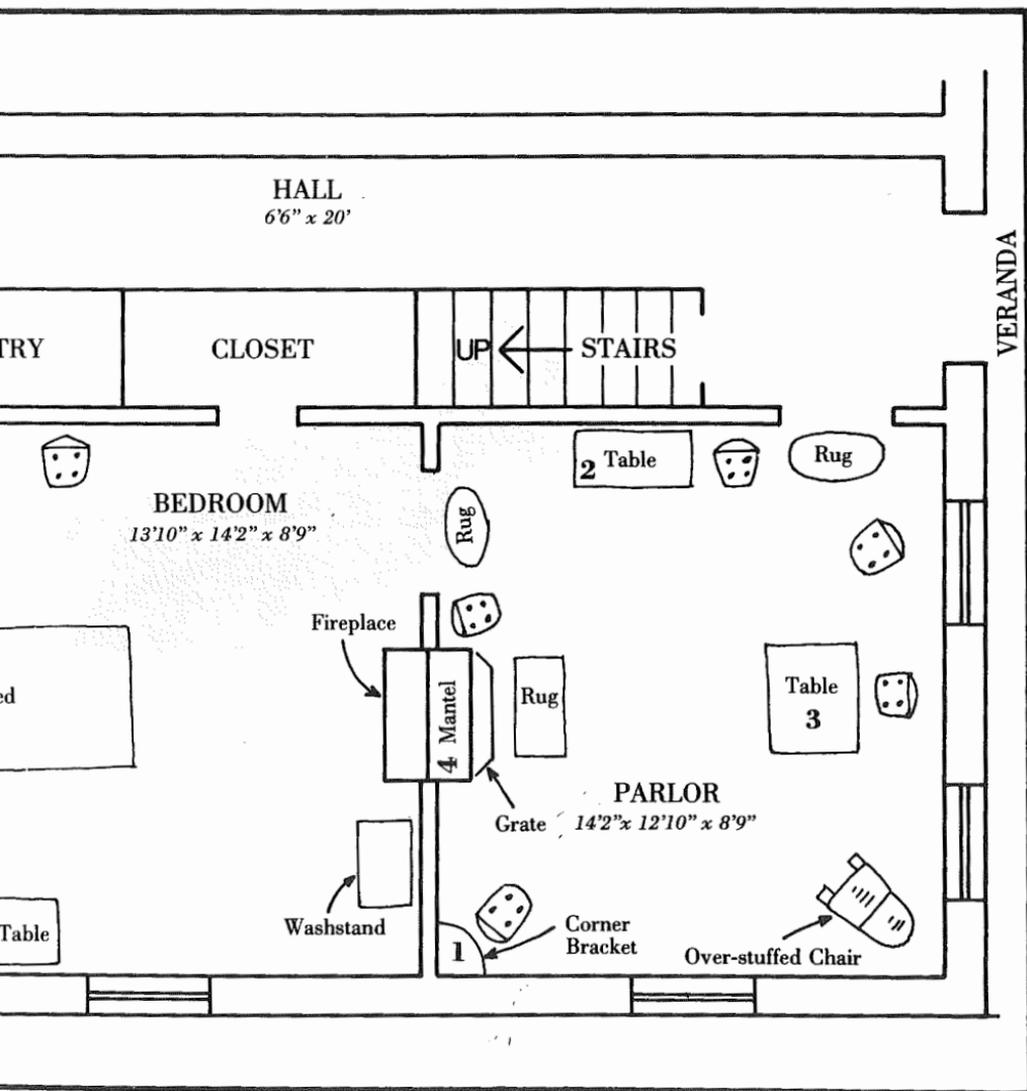


table with student's lamp and books (4) fireplace mantel with pictures, vases, and two red stone Indian pipes (5) dining room chairs, used throughout the house when not used at the table.

Pictures: Two dancing girls over table number 2; little slate pictures between two front windows; two of Dr. Winne's watercolor paintings on sides of windows. Gray carpet with crimson vine pattern in parlor and bedroom; striped matting in dining room. Crimson curtains at windows.

the locusts in full bloom, and live in hope that the time will soon come when we can bid goodby to this kind of life. It is not to our taste but might be worse. I hope you will be able to go fishing this summer and would like to be there when you return. Some nice trout would be a treat—in fact, any change from this horrible tough beef and ham would be delightful. . . .

Jennie (my maid) has just brought me in a beautiful bouquet of wild geranium. I wish you could see them. They are very pretty. . . .

July 2, 1876

[*To Della*] Charlie had a letter from the Indian expedition from one of the officers from here last night. He witnessed the fight but was not in it.⁴² He would be very thankful to be back at Sidney, as I doubt not all the rest would, as they expect still hotter work before it is over. So I don't feel like complaining very much. . . .

We shall have no doings here on the 4th, I am happy to say, for I am not over enthusiastic on the subject of this glorious country. I think it's a great fraud. The man who has the most money and can find place and position gets them. Money and political influence govern this glorious "free" country. There is too much wire pulling. For instance a case here which is a disgrace to the country. Among the commissioners to the Centennial from this state is a man by the name of Haberson⁴³ who kept a low den and dance house in Sidney & who last Christmas night after getting one of the soldiers drunk struck him on the head with a pistol, the hammer fracturing his skull, and from the effects. . . the soldier died two days later.

The murderer was tried and altho the evidence was all on one side & against him, he was acquitted by a Sidney jury.⁴⁴ A pretty man to send to a state commission to our country's centennial. But best of all the skull, which he fractured is now on exhibition among the specimens in the surgical department from the army medical museum. Charlie at the post mortem removed the top of the skull, and it was first produced as evidence at the trial & then he sent it to Washington as a rare specimen of "punctured fracture." It is mentioned in the report of specimens sent from the museum exhibition at Philadelphia.

July 16, 1876

[*To Father*] I suppose you think I might write to you oftener than I do, and everyday I think of it, but really there is nothing to write about. You do not know anybody here and nothing happens week in & week out of interest to anyone. The war news you get sooner than we do. Of course there are all kinds of reports flying about just as during our great war. Horrors did not come fast enough to suit some people. They must manufacture all sorts of evil reports to make the lives of anxious wives and friends still more miserable.

The Custer massacre⁴⁵ is too dreadful to think of, particularly as it was caused so uselessly by his own folly & disobedience of orders. We did not know anyone who was with the command. All of our friends are with Crook.

July 21, 1876

[To Father] What a world of sorrow this is. Of course this is a particularly sad summer to us out here in daily expectation of news from the Indian war. There are several ladies here whose husbands are out with Crook's command, and this dreadful Custer massacre has cast a gloom over everything and makes us constantly dread a repetition of it. Custer's own foolhardiness and vanity & well known love of display & notoriety was the sole & only cause of this horrible affair and of the sorrow brought into hundreds of homes. All who speak of it say only this.

July 30, 1876

[To Father]. . . Capt. Monahan is with us now. Came on Thursday and will have to leave tomorrow morning for Fort Russell (Cheyenne)⁴⁶ & Fetterman enroute to the seat of war. He has given up a month of his leave.

September 10, 1876

[To Ludlow]. . . I pity the poor soldiers who are out. We hear nothing from them except that it is known they are on the march back having accomplished just nothing. They are very short of provisions, hard bread & bacon only, & not much of that I guess. Both men and horses about used up. And as it was so confidently asserted that it was to be but a three month's campaign. No one went supplied with warm & sufficient clothing for such weather as this. Everyone of any sense is as disgusted as you, I think, with the way things are managed.

I wish it were possible for us to get out of the army. If we knew of any place to go, we would go tomorrow, & I know a great many officers who would leave the army if they were sure of bread & butter out of it. It was & is such an outrage that Charlie was obliged to come back at all. I can't bear to have him waste his life and his talents in this way, but I trust something will turn up before we are much older to bring us into civil & civilized life. . . .

It is so long since I have seen any pretty flowers or a really flourishing plant. It would be a real feast to see all of yours. Some of the ladies have a few house plants here, but they are sickly looking things, and the earth they are in looks as much like ashes as anything. I don't blame any respectable variety of plants for refusing to grow in such soil. The only beautiful thing out here is the sunsets and they are gorgeously beautiful. Really I never saw such brilliantly colored clouds.

Charlie would enjoy a smoke & good talk with you. He has no society here. None of these officers know anything to talk about. Charlie meets them officially & that's all. We will be rejoiced to see the old cavalry command come back, poor fellows. I want to have lots of good things to eat ready if they come back. I shall want to do something for them. Charlie was just up town & saw in an Omaha paper a letter from someone in Crook's command⁴⁷ saying the whole command were to be put on half rations of hard bread the next day. And they should have to depend upon hunting for their food, that the horses were about used up, and a great deal of scurvy & dysentery among officers & men. I suppose the hospital will be full of sick men this winter if they come back.

And for all this suffering Sherman & Sheridan⁴⁸ are alone to blame. Sheridan, drunk all the time in Chicago in his fine house, says there are troops enough, and Sherman, on his general's pay in Washington, never having fought an Indian & knowing nothing at all about them, practically upholds him. . . and says volunteers are worth nothing. A few hundred recruits are all that we need, and in the meantime our poor little army suffering untold hardships and die, or lay the foundations of life-long disease. This summer's work and blundering is a burning shame & disgrace to the country, if our country can be disgraced anymore. It seems as though the limit had been reached. . . .

How I would enjoy one of Mr. Williams' good sermons today. This seems a heathenish way to live.

September 19, 1876

[To Ludlow] We are as usual here—letter days come around so fast—and there is nothing happens between them to tell you. I suppose we shall soon have all the companies in for the winter, & it will be a little more lively here, but you can hardly imagine anything more quiet than our life now. But it still suits us very well. Charlie is such a homebody. We read & talk and walk and are just as happy, I doubt not, as though there was more going outside. We have read the Rise of the Dutch Republic & History of the United Netherlands this summer with an occasional novel thrown in. And then we have Scribners every month and the Tribune every day, which with some time on Charlie's part to his medical books and with my sewing & household cares, serve to fill every day pretty well and make the time pass by pleasantly as well as profitably. . . .

Don't fail to send me some ferns and autumn leaves. I want to trim my house, and can get nothing here except some bouquets of pretty grasses which I have gathered. . . . We have a little box of a home, but small as it is, we have so much real solid comfort and enjoyment in it independent of anything and anybody outside, and I know you would

enjoy it. . . . How I should enjoy one of his [Mr. Williams'] good sermons. I feel like a heathen out here.

P.S. Will you please try to get me at Keller's a yard of edging like this sample. A wretched laundress I had while without a girl used I believe concentrated lye by the looks of some of my things, among others this new night gown. She tore all the edge off the sleeves.

October 13, 1876

[*To Della*]. . . . Our garrison is as usual—dull. No hopes, I fear, of the return of our cavalry friends. A new officer came yesterday, a Lieut. of the 9th Infantry.⁴⁹ What he is sent here for, no one knows. His company isn't here or any of the 9th Infantry troops, & he is under suspension anyway for selling Govt. property, so he isn't a man we will care to know, and she is a disagreeable looking woman.

We are both well and very comfortable, but we would like to see you all. Still don't let us complain while Charlie is left here, as we feel very sure he will be—that is, I mean not sent to the field.

October 29, 1876

[*To Father*]. . . . We are most interested of course of what we hear & see most of, and that is the Sioux war. The summer expedition is broken up and ordered into winter quarters, and a new one is being organized to start as soon as possible. There will be great suffering, no doubt, and probably loss of life from the cold, but there is no doubt winter is the time to strike the Sioux, and now the Govt. has commenced this thing they can't stop or turn back. A great blow has been dealt by disarming these agency Indians, and we sincerely hope this campaign will see the end of actual hostilities, tho there will have to be posts established and large garrisons left in that country for a long time to come.

There is an officer here now who has been in the field all summer, and we have several others. They suffered intensely and much of the time unnecessarily, But still they look well and feel the same. Little has been accomplished, tho' not much. One great thing has been accomplished, and that is Genl. Crook has discovered that he has different people to deal with in these Northern Sioux, from the Apaches of New Mexico and Arizona.⁵⁰ He acknowledges now that he had no idea when he started in this war that he had such a warlike nation to deal with.

Our garrison here is to be an entirely new one this winter. Our good friends the Monahans are to be at Fort Laramie, and we are to have everyone new. I am so truly thankful though that Charlie is not to go into the field that I make no complaints and even to have had to move to another post in the Department would be decidedly unpleasant. The only move we would like to make this fall is to the Dept. of the Atlantic.

Such orders are hardly possible in December I suppose. . . .

We are well as usual, and though rather weary of Frontier life, still we are very comfortable and have nothing to complain of.

December 3, 1876

[To Father] We have an entire new garrison⁵¹ and very pleasant people too. But we would be very glad to be ordered east this fall. Two years are quite long enough to be in such a place as this, and Charlie was so long on the frontier before he resigned. It ought to be counted on this detail, but I very much fear it will not be. I wish he had influential friends enough to have simple justice done him, for there is no such thing as justice except what political influence can command.

December 31, 1876

[To Ludlow]. . . We have closed our second year at this post. Tomorrow will be the third New Year's day. It hasn't seemed at all like holiday week. Christmas was quiet—as every other day—and very cold, as the whole week has been. Tomorrow we are invited out to dine at the R.R. House. The gentleman⁵² who owns & keeps this house with his family are about the nicest people we have met since we came out here. Their name is Rumsey and the old gentleman, a thorough gentleman and sensible man, and Charlie have always taken a fancy to each other, and we like the family. . . .

An invitation to dinner, or in fact any invitation & outside the post too, is a wonderful thing to us. We, no doubt, will have a good dinner, and it is a pleasure to spend a few hours with people who are congenial—and that the most of Army people are not.

January 7, 1877

[To Ludlow]. . . This is a great post for changes. The 9th Infantry Headqts., band, and Co. now here are ordered to Omaha. The report is another Co. of Cavalry (the 5th) & a Major of the 5th are to come here. Charlie and I are delighted to have those people go. We don't like them.

January 14, 1877

[To Ludlow]. . . I wish you could see how it looks off here, if you would like to—but you would be satisfied with one look. It is a barren, desolate country, and we'll be two happy ones if the day ever comes when we can turn our backs upon it and never see it again. And to be so near this dreadful, low frontier town is horrible. We were awakened last night by the discharge of fire arms, and Charlie lay awake in mortal terror of being called up to dress some frightful wound. But the only man hurt was shot through the body & passed before [beyond] the power of

surgical skill to help or save. A dreadful row in a low dance house between citizens & soldiers, and as usual a poor soldier was the one killed.⁵³ It isn't exactly pleasant to be awaken[ed] two or three hours in the night with such a row & commotion going on so near. Of course we are perfectly safe here at the post. But it is dreadful to know about such things. I wish we were out of the army, but. . . this doesn't seem possible just yet. . . .

Well, the 9th Infantry Hdqts. & all have left us, and we have instead a Co. of 3rd Cavalry, and we believe to have a major of the 5th Cavalry in command very soon. . . .

The report is now that Spotted Tail has asked and received permission to go out with his band and bring in Crazy Horse & the rest of the hostiles.⁵⁴ If he succeeds I suppose that's the end of the Indian War, and there will be no more expeditions. I hope so, for I feel confident if there should be another one in the spring that Charlie would have to go.

January 28, 1877

[To Ludlow]. . . Letter day finds me with the usual dearth of news. The only thing that happened out of the usual routine last week was an accident which resulted in the death of a poor drunken wretch. Thursday evening Charlie was sent for to come up to the depot & see a man who, in attempting to cross the tracks, between the cars of a moving freight train, had been knocked down & run over. He found the poor wretch dreadfully crushed & horribly drunk. He sent down for a stretcher and had him brought to the hospital. He amputated one leg about half way between the knee & hip—and at the other leg which was broken in two places. But the poor man died in the night a few hours after the operation. . . . The steward⁵⁵ said he did not think that he was sober yet when he died.

February 4, 1877

[To Ludlow]. . . What do you think! We have been to church this morning for the first time in over two years. An Episcopal clergyman from Omaha⁵⁶ had services in the school house. I was astonished to see such a good congregation. He seemed to be a very earnest good man and gave us a good plain earnest talk from the text, "When I have a convenient season I will call for Thee." Really this is the only Sunday that has seemed like Sunday since we came here. There is no place on the face of the whole earth, I am very sure, where preaching and true missionary work is more needed than this. . . .

My letters I know are so stupid. I am positively ashamed to send them. You think your lives monotonous. I wonder what you would

think out here, & still I never knew time to fly so, so the weeks are gone before I have accomplished one half I want to. We are deprived of very much that we would greatly enjoy seeing and having, but these months and years we have spent in this happy house so quietly by ourselves, we shall always remember as a very happy time. I hope Charlie may succeed in the effort he is making to have his resignation revoked and I suppose he has an equal chance whomever is declared President. . . .⁵⁷

Never did real trees and flowers and grass look more beautiful to human eyes than they will to me. After seeing only these wretched dry barren plains so long with their stunted Buffalo grass and cactus plants.

February 18, 1877

[To Ludlow]. . . Wednesday was pay day, and there have been the usual horrors since. One cold blooded murder; one soldier shot another. The poor wretch was brought down to the hospital, but nothing could be done. He lived thirteen hours, & since Charlie had a post mortem; he wonders he did not die instantly—whiskey the cause of course.⁵⁸

February 25, 1877

[To Ludlow]. . . I shall come east this spring of course. I am delighted at the thought of seeing you all and want to come. But then it will be very hard to go away and leave Charlie here. If the Surgeon Genl. had one grain of decency about him, he would order him east this spring. . . .

Everything is quiet here. There are rumors of another Indian expedition in the spring, but nobody knows anything. . . .

March 6, 1877

[To Father] Charlie has been busy all day examining the whole garrison to see if they had all been vaccinated and vaccinating a great many. There is a case of Small Pox in Sidney. And I have been this P.M. to see a Pawnee War Dance.⁵⁹ Except for this, I should have written earlier & more at length.

March 11, 1877

[To Ludlow] I have been to church again today! An Episcopal minister from North Platte⁶⁰ had services in the school house. I believe there is to be services every two weeks after this. I don't know of any place which needs it more. . . .

Everyone is hoping there will not be any Indian expedition sent out this spring, but there probably will, and I feel very confident Charlie will have to go. He can't hope to escape again, as nearly every medical officer in the Department has been out. Oh, how I wish we were out of the army altogether and it makes me so indignant that Charlie was compelled to come back.

I am feeling quite well again. I don't know when I shall come east—perhaps next month, perhaps not before May.

March 20, 1877

[To Della] There has been a vegetable & fruit store opened here, & we are getting California vegetables & oranges & will have other fruits, so I will not be dependent upon beef & potatoes as I was before. . . .

So now, my dear sister, you know all about it. I shall stay here anyway until it is decided whether Charlie goes to the field for the summer, & if he doesn't, I shall stay on & my baby will be a native of Nebraska.

March 25, 1877

[To Ludlow] We had church in the little school house again. A rather weak sermon—and I think a pretty weak man. Oh, how I should enjoy Mr. Williams once more.

The only excitement we have had lately is a small pox scare.⁶¹ There are several cases in Sidney, and Charlie is trying to prevent its getting into the garrison. I don't feel afraid of it for myself, but there were a good many children who had never been vaccinated, and some of them he has tried five or six times. The vaccine I suppose was not good.

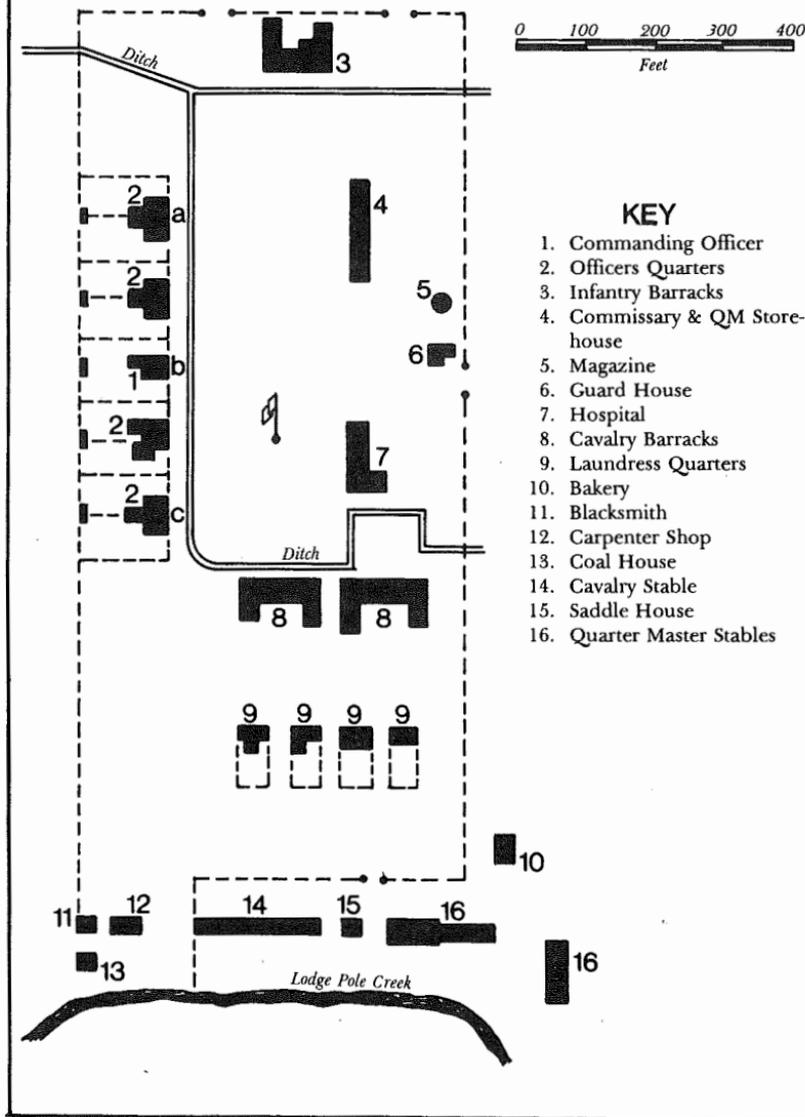
April 1, 1877

[To Della] I would enjoy some of your beautiful flowers, but one can't have everything, and now we are able to get such nice vegetables & fruit, which I really need. We get very fresh good oranges & lemons for 50¢ a dozen, which is very cheap here & they do me so much good. And now he is bringing us delicious, crisp lettuce. I don't like meat, & I don't want to eat it anymore, so that we feel that this funny little Dutchman⁶² is a perfect God send.

April 7, 1877

[To Ludlow] You are mistaken in supposing we have had opportunity to get all manner of Indian things. I certainly should have sent for some if we had. There never have been any Indians here since that first winter, and they were only passing back & forth from their hunts and had none of their war paint & feathers with them. The Pawnees captured a good many handsome things at the burning of Three Bears' village⁶³ on the last expedition, but they won't part with them for love or money. Of course these Scouts will go out again this spring. Whether any troops do or not. . . I will try to see Mr. North⁶⁴ before they go, and ask him to be sure to get some things for me. If the report is true—as all think it is—that Spotted Tail has succeeded in bringing Crazy Horse & his warriors, why we may rest in peace for that is vitually the end of the Indian Wars. There will be scouting parties sent out of course but no regular expeditions. We all breath easier. . . .

Plan of SIDNEY BARRACKS-1875



(a) The Winnes' permanent quarters from January, 1875, to November, 1877, (south half). (b) Commanding Officers quarters where they stayed temporarily in January, 1875. (c) The new quarters in which they were originally to live.

What a satisfaction it would be to throw up the whole thing. Oh, for a good opening somewhere. We would return to civil life & a home of our own with much thankfulness of heart.

We have a new commanding officer, Major Gordon⁶⁵ of the 5th Cavalry. We like him very much. He seems a perfect gentleman. His wife too seems pleasant, & I am in hopes they will wear well—so few people do, anyway in the army.

April 15, 1877

[*To Ludlow*] I am seated with nothing to say. . . . Charlie says I shouldn't have explained the Indians the first winter I came out here, for I have never had anything to write since, but then there have never been any Indians since. Last Tuesday, tho, there was a sham fight between the Pawnees and one company of cavalry here. It was exciting to see the wild wretches ride. They didn't succeed in stampeding the cavalry as they expected, for our horses stood firm as a rock, but several men were badly burned with powder. The horrid savages would ride up so close & fire in their faces. One man was shot square in the eyes, and Charlie is afraid he will lose the sight of both eyes. It was supposed to be good practice for our men, particularly for the recruits, but the whole thing was hardly worth the blinding of one man.⁶⁶

April 23, 1877

[*To Della*] You of course see the Indian news as soon as we do, and see that there will probably be no expedition, for which let us all be devotedly thankful. I am feeling perfectly well, so never any of you worry. Let us hope for the best & trust that our fondest hopes will this time be fulfilled.

May 6, 1877

[*To Ludlow*] I wish I had something interesting to write you, but there is nothing. Genl. Crook was here last Sunday on his way east, but we did not see him, or so much as knew he was here until the next day. I believe that the Indian War in this Department was practically at an end. And now I suppose Congress will begin to cut down the little army. The last news I believe is that there is to be no extra session until October, which will leave us all four months without any pay—which makes it pleasant.⁶⁷

May 18, 1877

[*To Father*] I know you all are disappointed that I have given up coming east this summer, but for the present it is better, I feel sure, for me to remain quietly here. It is a long time to be so far away but unavoidable and we must all make the best of it. If my husband could see any

opening with prospect of success anywhere, he would leave the army, but the trouble is there are too many physicians in the country and hundreds more being ground out every year, and he is too old to begin as a boy would be satisfied to now.

May 20, 1877

[To Della] I wish our country wasn't so immense. Then it wouldn't be possible for us to get so far apart. I feel it dreadfully sometimes. . . .

We are being all stirred up here again. The Co. of the 3rd Cavalry which has been here all winter is ordered away. And our officer belonging to it⁶⁸ with his wife will be a great loss to the post. So goes the army always, and there is a great shaking in the boots among officers nowadays over the probable reduction of the army by Congress next fall.⁶⁹ We don't care. It probably couldn't touch us anyway, and we wouldn't care if it did, but no pay for four months this summer won't be pleasant for anyone.

May 27, 1877

[To Ludlow] It is astonishing the amount of rain we have had this month. Something entirely unprecedented in this country. The leaves are out at last, enough to give a little shade, and the grass is so green and unusually high and thick. The little post really looks beautiful.

July 1, 1877

[To Father] My good friend Mrs. Monahan is with us now. She will remain till Saturday of this week. . . .

Charlie is very busy indeed. His hospital steward⁷⁰ died very suddenly about three weeks ago, and it gives him all the monthly papers to make out himself, which is by far a greater matter than anyone would imagine who does not know about them, and Charlie's eyes are not strong. He cannot write in the evening at all, hasn't for years, and only a little while at a time by daylight. I do a great deal of his writing for him always.

July 11, 1877

[To Father] We are having some very hot weather again, but it looks like rain just now, probably one of our dreadful thunderstorms. They are frightful. It is seldom you have such storms back east. You will be sure, Father, we shall come east just as soon as we can. Were it possible we would leave the army & come tomorrow. But we hardly see our way clear to do so just yet.

August 19, 1877

[To Ludlow] We will enjoy your museum very much, and would like to add something to it if we could. Charlie has a letter from Dr. Koerpe,⁷¹

the other night. He said the order for the moccasins was in the hands of a good squaw and they would be done in a few days. We already have the pouch, a very pretty one, and will send the things together soon. . . . The Indians do not use bow & arrows or spears anymore in hunting. But they can be got at the agencys. No Indians ever come here anymore. And nothing of this kind can be bought here. . . .

The story is that there are to be many changes in this department this fall, so we shall, I fear, have a new garrison again. We have such nice people now. I wish we all could be left in peace. We shan't be moved. Charlie is out seeing a patient, a little girl with a broken arm. Private practice fortunately & sure pay.

August 26, 1877

[*To Della*] Well, we are being stirred up again here. Last Tuesday orders came for K Co. 5th Cav., to go to Camp Brown,⁷² away up in Wyoming Terr., so they have been all week packing up and are to start tomorrow morning. Capt. Woodson⁷³ of that co. has been our next door neighbor. We are sorry for them, that they have to go. But rejoiced that it was not Sumner's Co. instead. I suppose there will be another Co. sent here. So it goes, all the time moves and changes. The Woodsons have been married about twelve years, and they have averaged one move a year. How would you like such a life as that!

September 2, 1877

[*To Ludlow*] We have had quite an exciting time in our little garrison the past week. Tuesday night one company left for good, and the next day orders came for Capt. Sumner's⁷⁴ Co. to be in readiness to start at a moment's notice for Camp Brown. This, however, is only temporary duty. The whole 5th Cavalry, and I believe part of the 3rd, has gone out to meet the Nez Perces, which they probably won't succeed in doing.⁷⁵ Sumner was away on a fishing trip and had to be sent for, and now we have a Co. of the 9th Infantry here, 27 men.⁷⁶

Tuesday night we had the most dreadful hail storm I ever experienced. We only wished it had happened in the day time if it had to come at all. . . . The hailstones measured from 1½ to 3 inches in diameter, and probably we didn't get the largest. . . . It was not just pleasant to venture out in the dark. . . when such chunks of ice were falling fast & thick. It was enough to hear them on the roofs, for with the thunder & lightning which accompanied them, one could almost imagine the last day had come.

September 7, 1877

[*To Father*] We are pretty well. Charlie's eyes trouble him very much, but he has a new steward, just come this morning, who will relieve him very

much. You will see fuller accounts of the latest Indian trouble than I can give you before this reaches you. It's only a pity Crazy Horse wasn't killed.

September 9, 1877

[*To Ludlow*] The one piece of news—or rather the one event which rejoices us all—will not be news to you when you receive this. I mean the death of the bloody savage, Crazy Horse. It is an event to be devoutly thankful for, as it will not only save the Govt. much expense but will doubtless save a winter campaign & much suffering to our troops, besides many lives probably. He was the head, at front of the whole troubles, and he was never conquered, only came in to be fed up and provide his band with arms & ammunition.⁷⁷ The 5th Cav., who have gone out to Camp Brown, report no sign of Indians in those parts and will probably be back soon again.

September 23, 1877

[*To Ludlow*] We have at last the moccasins, very pretty ones too—and I meant they should be sent at once—but we are afraid to risk them as third class mail and as registered letter postage or express from here they would cost so much. I said we would keep the package awhile & may have an opportunity to send it. This is a hard year for army people, & we of course have extra expenses this fall.⁷⁸

Well, Major Gordon received a reply to his letter to Sheridan to the effect that, as Dr. Winne resigned voluntarily, it would be an injustice to other officers to restore him, & so declined to interfere in the matter. I never had any expectations from him, but Major Gordon is disappointed & disgusted, he being a reappointment by Sheridan's influence. Oh, how we do hate the whole thing.

September 30, 1877

[*Letter to her Father and Ludlow from Dr. Winne*] It affords me the greatest possible happiness to write that Carrie is the happy mother of a boy. The youngster weighs 10 lbs. and was here a few minutes after ten this morning. Carrie had a wonderfully easy time, and both mother and child are well, with love to all from us both. Yours very sincerely, C. K. Winne.

October 5, 1877

[*To Della*] I suppose you will laugh when I tell you that this baby is the most beautiful child ever seen, but I have the testimony of the ladies of the garrison to that effect.

October 8, 1877

[*To Ludlow*] I sent my little son out to make some calls on the ladies of the

garrison yesterday. How I wished I could send him to see you and Della. I never wanted to come home so much before as I do to show you my precious baby boy.

October 31, 1877

[*To Ludlow*] We don't say positively when we shall come home. If Congress don't go to work pretty soon, I don't know how the poor army will live anyway. No pay since June. How people have lived, I don't see. I wish we were clear of the whole thing. I suppose you have heard that there has been another blunder & Charlie has failed to secure a reappointment. The paper went again to the Adjutant General. He too says the resignation cannot be revoked, which we did not ask for this time, only a reappointment, but the wrong papers must have done it.

November 7, 1877

[*To Della*] Charlie's eyes are somewhat better, but he still has to read with glasses even in the day. When Congress consents to pay us once more, we may feel rich enough to come.

November 14, 1877

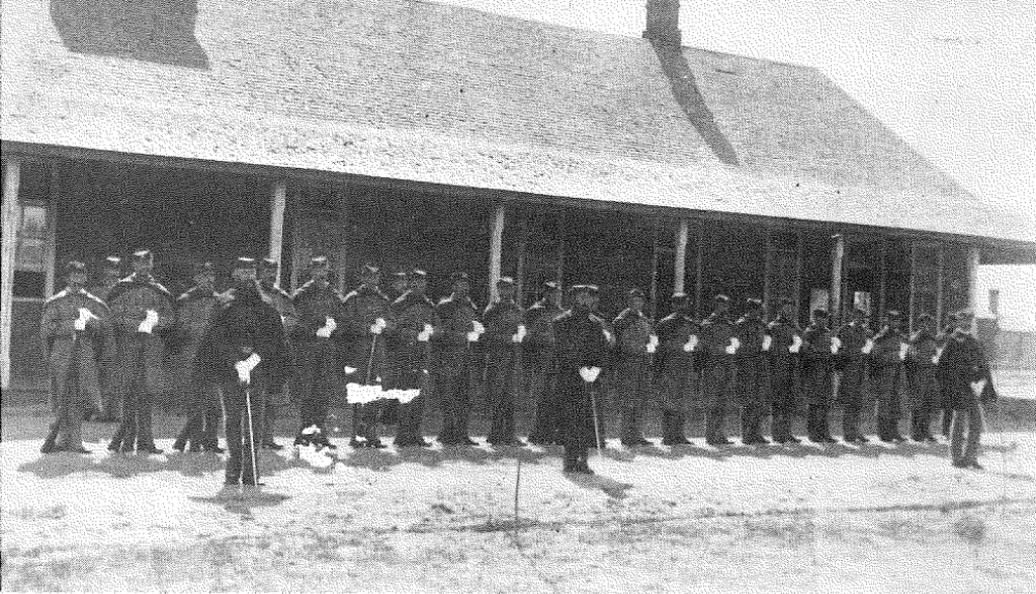
[*To Ludlow*] I haven't a bit of news. I see less than ever of the garrison people—and no one else of course—and we are very happy and thankful to be together and all the anxiety and dread of so many months are past.

I have had another dread, but am thankful to say that's over too. I thought I was going to lose my good girl & felt very much with Mrs. Sumner. She said she did pity me so for she always felt that trouble with servants was only next worse to a death in the house, but Jennie has concluded to stay until spring anyway, and I feel a very great weight off my shoulders, for I never expected to get her equal again. She has her faults, like the rest of us, but she is as near perfect as I can expect to find in a servant, & I can trust her with baby any time.

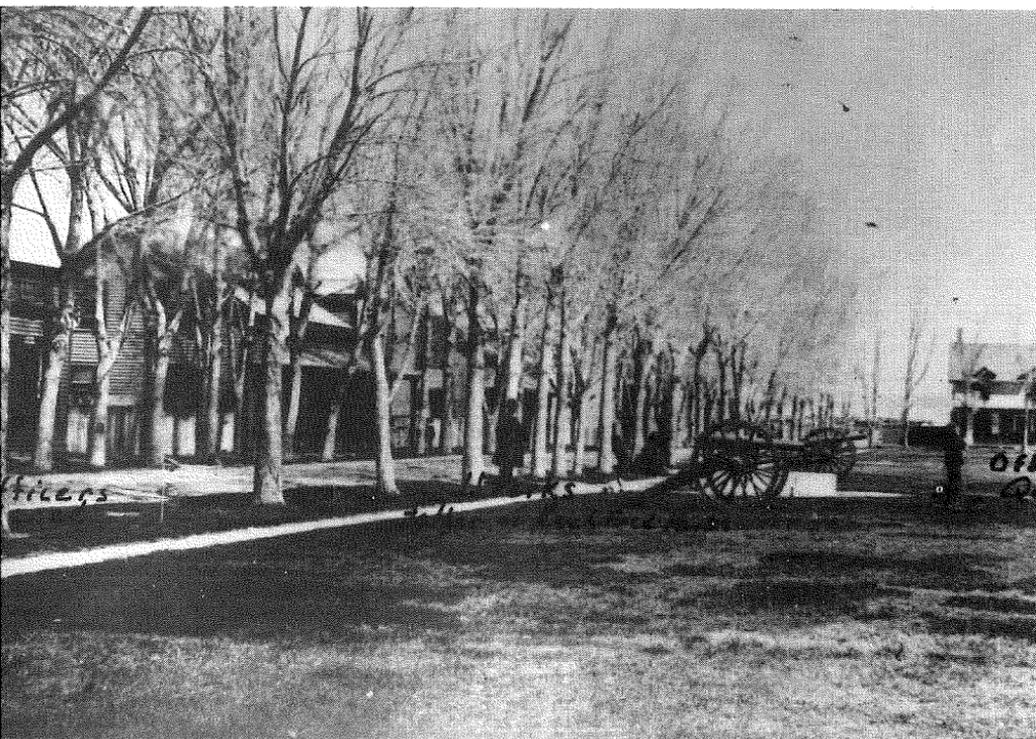
November 24, 1877

[*To Ludlow*] You doubtless have my postal card of last Sunday telling you that we were ordered to McPherson,⁷⁹ and I suppose have looked anxiously for written news from me. But I have not had any time to write, so will tell you now—all there is to tell. We had heard it rumored about that Charlie was to be moved, but did not believe it because when Dr. Summers was here he had spoken of the changes to be made in stations of Medical officers in the dept. and he said nothing of Charlie's going. So we were as astonished as you when we found we were really to go to McPherson & Dr Munn⁸⁰ from Camp Robinson⁸¹ coming here.

It is pretty hard to move with little baby and at this season too, but



Company G, 21st Infantry, in front of Fort Sidney barracks, 1885. . . . (Below) Fort Sidney parade ground, 1884. The commanding officer's residence (extreme left) and officers' quarters (extreme right) are still standing. Courtesy Cheyenne County Historical Association.



such is the army. Well, we commenced packing at once, supposing Munn would be here the first of the week. We left our little house, where so much has happened, & we have been so happy, and came to Col Gordon's on Tuesday, where we still are, as Munn is not coming until tomorrow. We hope to get away Monday night. Our things have gone & will be there ahead of us, so we can get settled at once. Charlie had a letter from Dr. Summers saying he had not intended moving him this fall & that he exceedingly regretted being obliged by circumstances to do so. He didn't say what the circumstances were, but we think that Dr. Munn, who is an unprincipled man and a disgrace to the corps & the army, has by some wire pulling arranged the thing with Crook. It is too bad and everyone here is mad about it, but it can't be helped. . . .

Jennie, my girl, is going with us for awhile till we get settled, & I hope will stay till spring. We don't expect to like our new post as well as this. I will write you about it when we get there. If Charlie had succeeded in having justice done him, this probably would not have happened. He would have had too much rank to be moved for Munn. . . .

We are having a regular Sidney storm today, a farewell wind. That's one thing we shall have less of at McPherson. We will be several hundred feet lower there, and they say the climate is better, & we are a few hours nearer home. That is North Platte is--But the eighteen mile ambulance ride will not be pleasant.

November 30, 1877

Fort McPherson

[*To Ludlow*]. . . Your letter came this morning, and I will improve the time while baby is quiet & does not need me to tell you of our journey and of this post.

We left Sidney Monday evening and reached North Platte about 2 o'clock AM Tuesday. I stayed there with baby, and Charlie came over to this post to select quarters and to get something done. My girl (a new one) came down Tuesday evening & Charlie came back on Wednesday for us, & yesterday morning about ten o'clock we started over in a nice comfortable little ambulance.⁸²

It was intensely cold (about zero), but we were well wrapped up and did not suffer at all. Baby slept all the way. I have a lovely set of white furs for him, long cloak & hood, and he cannot get cold. We came over in about two hours and were very hospitably welcomed by Genl. Carr (Lieut. col of the 5th Cavalry),⁸³ & his very pleasant wife. He is commanding officer. We have a large pleasant room & shall stay here till we get our little box fixed up.

This is a very large post, but there are but three companies here now, 1 of the 5th Cavalry and 2 of the 9th Infantry.⁸⁴ The post is a very old one, & the quarters all one story brown houses & all very dilapidated. It is a rather desolate looking place, but the hospital is nice, and the house

we have taken has been occupied by the Quarter Master & is really in very good order, the best of any here. It is very small. I will make a little plan of it as best I can. but snug & can easily be kept in order & kept warm, for this is a cold place.

We regret very much leaving Sidney Barracks, but this is a good place to go on leave from & you may see us someday. We were left a long time at Sidney & have no right to complain, hard as it was to have to move. Dr. Summers has been very kind & would not have moved us now if he could have helped it, and the move does not mean three years more in this Dept. These changes are always made. We have been unusually fortunate to stay so long at S.

Dr. Gibson⁸⁵ goes from here to Fort Russell in Cheyenne. He has three children and the oldest not four years yet & the baby 10 months, so his case is worse than ours. This post is near the South Platte River and in summer is they say very pleasant, tho' there are very few trees. Still we may not be here next summer. I don't think this thing has increased our love for the army, & when we do come east, no stone will be left unturned to get out entirely. It is an outrage that Charlie has to stay on, or even had to come back. But it can't last always, and it might be worse. . . .

My girl that I have had so long was not willing to come here & stay. She would have come for a little while to get me settled, but the night before I left Sidney, this girl came for the place. She had lived here & wanted to come with me & so I took her. She is very fond of babies & will be more helpful to me in that way than Jennie. How much a cook [she] will be remains to be seen.

I am anxious to get settled again. It seems such a long time since we broke up our pleasant little home. Oh, it was too bad that it had to be. We will never have so pleasant, pretty a little post again.

December 2, 1877

Fort McPherson

[To Father]. . . Your letter came yesterday, and I will try the first mail to relieve your mind by saying that this move does not mean three years more in Nebraska. I am very thankful to say these changes in the stations of medical officers are frequently made. In fact, it is a very unusual thing to be left a full detail in one place, and Charlie has been very fortunate to stay at Sidney Barracks so long. We have the Medical Director of this Dept., who is a warm personal friend, to thank for it, and he regretted being obliged to move us now, but he could not have his way. I think you will see us the sooner for the move. . . .

We are staying now with the commanding officer but hope to get into our own little box tomorrow, and I shall be glad to be settled once more.

December 6, 1877

Fort McPherson

[To Ludlow]. . . Well, we are settled in our new home—and very comfortably settled too. The house has less rooms but it for all that is more roomy than the one we occupied at Sidney Barracks. The parlor is much larger, and also the bedroom & the kitchen here would make two of my old one. We have a large coal stove in the parlor and a small one in our bedroom, so can keep the hall door open & hall warm all the time & dining room likewise. It is astonishing how soon one can feel at home in new quarters and at a new post in the army. Now the change is made & we are settled we don't mind. Charlie has gained immensely in hospitals. This is a large and very nice one. The country about here, too, is more pleasant than about Sidney. I went to ride with Mrs. Carr the other day through a lovely little canyon. It must be beautiful in summer, it is so wild & picturesque now. I had no idea just what those little canyons were like before.

The Carrs are very hospitable, pleasant people. Mrs. C. is very handsome and very intelligent & sensible. I like her very much. She with the post trader's wife & myself are the only ladies here, but another one with five children is coming tomorrow.

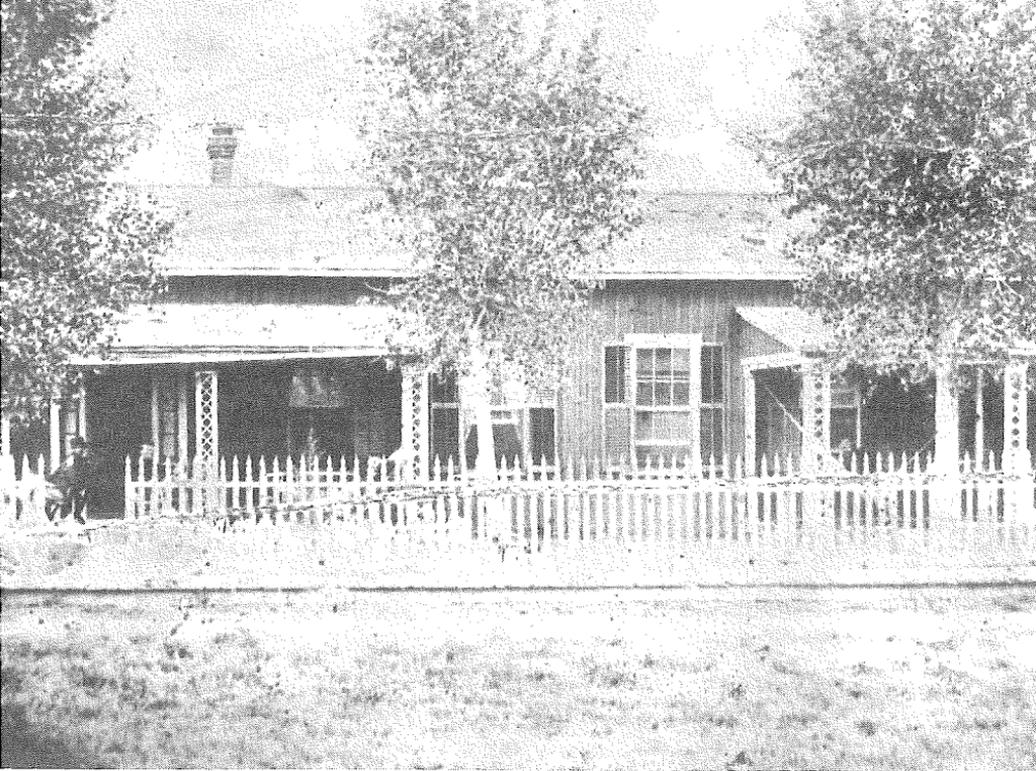
The report is that the 3rd Cavalry is ordered to Texas. How sorry I am for them. The change may be a pleasant one after it is made, but the breaking up & moving is anything but pleasant. Poor little Mrs. Monahan. I can imagine her in the depths of despair. They are at Camp Sheridan⁸⁶ (Spotted Tail Agency) now.

December 16, 1877

Fort McPherson

[To Ludlow] We have been in the state of Nebraska three years today. We reached Omaha on the 16th. It is a long time, and since I left Sidney Barracks I am getting very homesick. I know I never could have the same feeling here. This post is so large & so few people here it seems lonely, and then too being off the railroad⁸⁷, the quiet is something you can feel, but still we are fortunate to be here. The climate is delightful. I never knew such weather at this season 60° & 63° for days past—and the air soft as June. It is a good place for baby, and we keep him outdoors a great deal.

Today we walked down to the river (the South Platte). It is about half a mile, I should think, back of the post. It must be lovely in summer. The river is very wide and full of islands covered with brush & cottonwood trees—some quite large trees too on some of the larger islands. It did my eyes good to see a real river once more, and I have felt better ever since. It was the most like home of anything I have seen in three years. There are a good many deer on these islands and in the canyons about



Officers' quarters at Fort McPherson during the 1870s.

here. General Carr got two one day last week. He has a good many hounds and hunts them only with the dogs. He went out again yesterday—and Mrs. Carr with him on horseback and some others in the ambulance to see the chase. He came to have us go, but of course I could not leave my small son so long, & Charlie has not rode in so long he wouldn't commence by trying a strange horse on a deer hunt. . . . Neither of us went and it was as well—for they did not see a deer till near home—and it did not run. I will try to get you some feathered grass that grows on some of the large islands. It is like the pampas grass of California.

Mrs. Carr has promised to take me out into one of the canyons to get cedar & bittersweet berries to trim the house for Christmas. So far as climate & country is concerned, we have gained by coming here. But for all, I do want to come home, more than I can tell anybody.

December 22, 1877

Fort McPherson

[To Della] Well we are surely coming—I don't know just how soon—but soon enough to begin to plan a little for it. Charlie's eyes need attending to, and a sick leave will give him full pay you know. Is there any respectful good dressmaker there now who could, with a little help in planning, fix over dresses. When I come, prepare to be ashamed of your backwoods sister, for I am actually shabby. . . .

I have nothing of interest to write of our every day life here, for it is more quiet even than at Sidney. Such a large post and so few people in it. I haven't seen anyone to speak of but my own family this week, . . . but then it has rained for three days.

I have not seen any deer yet & think there have been none taken since I wrote. There was a young elk in our yard yesterday. He belongs to I believe Genl. Carr, a tame one. This one is about as high as a cow, but smaller body of course, not a handsome animal by any means.

January 13, 1878

Fort McPherson

[*To Ludlow*] We really are getting to like old McPherson. Mrs. Carr is delightful and I enjoy her very much—the only drawback is being so far from a market, we get no vegetables or fruit but have the best meat we have had in the Dept. All the venison & that of the best we want at 8¢ a pound. Today we had an excellent 13 lb. turkey for dinner, for which I gave a dollar all dressed. So you see it's a cheap place to live, but I miss vegetables.

January 21, 1878

Fort McPherson

[*To Della*] We know nothing of our leave as yet but hope to hear this week, when we shall immediately start packing.

[*Dr. Winne was granted sick leave and they left for New York on February 20, 1878. Three months later, Winne was granted a leave of absence for one year, expiring May 30, 1879. They arrived at the doctor's new station, Fort Washakie, Wyoming Territory, on May 14, 1879.*]

NOTES

The editor acknowledges the assistance of staff member Jenny Lawrence of the New-York Historical Society, who helped prepare this article.

1. William H. Powell, *Records of Living Officers of the United States Army* (Philadelphia: Hammersly & Co., 1890), 653.

2. This letter was written several weeks before she and Dr. Winne were married on December 3, 1874. They arrived soon afterward at the Department Headquarters in Omaha to await assignment. On December 23, 1874, they reached Sidney Barracks, their first post.

3. Brigadier General Edward O. C. Ord commanded the Department of the Platte from December 11, 1871, to May 27, 1875. Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903), 759.

4. Captain William Hawley, Company A, 3rd Cavalry, was then post commander. Heitman, 513.

5. 2nd Lieutenant Charles Morton, post adjutant, Company A, 3rd Cavalry. Heitman, 730.

6. Acting Assistant Surgeon A. J. Flint, US Army, was a civilian surgeon under contract to the Army.

7. Mrs. Fenner was a neighbor in Palatine Bridge, New York.

8. An agency established in 1874 for the Brule Sioux 167 miles north of Sidney Barracks.

9. It was not uncommon for large numbers of Indians to visit the post in the earlier 1870s. In 1873 one band of over 700 Brule Sioux stopped at the post enroute to hunt in the Republican Valley. Telegrams received, Department of the Platte, July 21, 1873.

10. Wife of Captain Deane Monahan, commanding Company G, 3rd Cavalry. Heitman, 719. See *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1875-1876*, 72, for information on the November, 1874, Ute theft from the Oglala of 260 horses near Julesburg.

11. Red Fly was probably a band leader of the Brule Sioux living near the Spotted Tail Agency.

12. Two Lances was the principal chief of the Whistler band of Brule Sioux.

13. "Lo" or "Mr. Lo" was a standard frontier term referring to one or more Indians.

14. When they first arrived on post, the Winnes briefly stayed in the then-vacant commanding officer's quarters. Later they moved into the south half of the north duplex on the officers' row that was built in the summer of 1871. Captain Hawley lived in the north half.

15. Oglala Sioux living near the Red Cloud Agency, who normally crossed the Platte River to hunt in the winter months.

16. Old Man Afraid of His Horses led the Hunkpatila band and was the legitimate head chief recognized by the Oglalas.

17. Sitting Bull of the South, head chief of the Kiyuksa Oglala band. He was not the Hunkpapa Sitting Bull of Custer battle fame.

18. Young Man Afraid of His Horses was the son of Old Man Afraid of His Horses and was prominent in affairs at the Red Cloud Agency.

19. American Horse, a Sioux leader, later helped prevent an outbreak from the Red Cloud Agency after Crazy Horse was killed at Camp Robinson in September, 1877.

20. Little Wound, was a minor Sioux chief whose band crossed the Platte River without permission in 1872 and was pursued by cavalry from Sidney Barracks. Letters Received, Department of Platte, November 19-27, 1872.

21. Big Ribs was a band chief of the Oglala Sioux.

22. 1st Lieutenant Emmet Crawford, Company G, 3rd Cavalry, who was on special duty enrolling families of grasshopper sufferers in central Nebraska from February 2 to March 25, 1875. Post Returns, Fort Sidney, February, 1875.

23. Brigadier General George Crook commanded the Department of the Platte from April 27, 1875 through summer of 1882. Heitman, 340.

24. After the discovery of gold in the Black Hills, the Army attempted to intercept miners enroute to South Dakota or expel them after arrival. In November, 1875, the decision came to pull troops off Black Hills duty, effectively opening that area to the whites. Grant K. Anderson, "The Black Hills Exclusion Policy," *Nebraska History*, 58 (Lincoln; Spring, 1977), 1-24; "Samuel D. Hinman and the Opening of the Black Hills," 60 (Lincoln; Winter, 1979), 520-542.

25. Scientists of the Black Hills Expedition of 1875 confirmed the discovery of gold. Escorted by eight companies of troops, the expedition left Fort Laramie May 25 and returned late that summer.

26. Company M, 3rd Cavalry, at North Platte Station and Company G, 3rd Cavalry, at Sidney Barracks. Post Returns, Fort Sidney and North Platte Station, May, 1876.

27. Soldiers could be discharged on a surgeon's certificate of disability if it were determined that a soldier became impaired while on duty.

28. Until the early 1880s officers and families were waited on by soldier servants called "strikers." The strikers were paid for the extra work by the officers. Payment was usually \$5-\$10 a month depending on the type and amount of work performed.

29. In his medical report for July, 1875, Dr. Winne recorded 5.92 inches of rainfall. Medical Papers, Fort Sidney, July, 1875.

30. In October and November, 1875, Companies C and I, 3rd Cavalry, joined Company G at the post, making a garrison strength of 177 men. Post Returns, Fort Sidney, October and November, 1875.

31. A letter from the department headquarters to the commanding officers at Sidney Barracks, North Platte Station, Forts Laramie, Fetterman, and McPherson, stated that no longer would licenses be issued for Indians to cross the North Platte River to hunt, and that if Sioux Indians crossed the Platte, they were to be attacked by troops. Letters Sent, Department of Platte, 1875-1877.

32. Mr. Williams was minister of the church she attended in New York.

33. At Sidney Barracks, a monthly inspection of the soldiers was held by the commanding officer. This inspection required full dress uniform rather than regular duty dress. General Orders No. 19, Sidney Barracks, March 30, 1874.

34. Company G succeeded recapturing and returning two stolen horses. Post Returns, Fort Sidney, April, 1876.

35. In February, 1876, a column of 12 cavalry and infantry companies under General Crook headed into the Powder River country of Wyoming. Although they succeeded in destroying one village, the expedition was a failure.

36. Companies C, G, and I, 3rd Cavalry. Post Returns, Fort Sidney, May, 1876.

37. Fort Fetterman was established in 1867 on the south bank of the North Platte River near the mouth of La Prele Creek to protect emigrant routes and control Indians. Francis P. Prucha, *Guide to the Military Posts of the United States* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1964), 181.

38. Companies C and F, 23rd Infantry, arrived at Sidney from Omaha Barracks on May 11. Post Returns, Fort Sidney, May, 1876.

39. Captain George Randall, 23rd Infantry, served as Crook's chief of scouts during the 1876 campaign. Heitman, 814.

40. One enlisted man was detailed as a cook and another as a nurse from each company in the post hospital.

41. Don Pedro II, emperor of Brazil, passed through Sidney on the way to attend the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. *Sidney (Nebraska) Telegraph*, April 22, May 6, 1876.

42. The Battle of the Rosebud, June 17, 1876, when Crook's command attacked a concentration of hostiles on the Rosebud Creek in southern Montana. Having failed to defeat the Indians, Crook retired to his base in northern Wyoming. The Indians then joined Sitting Bull's band that ultimately destroyed Custer on the Little Big Horn.

43. William J. Habison was proprietor of the Cosmopolitan Saloon just south from the railroad depot in Sidney.

44. The soldier killed was John Carrol, Company C, 3rd Cavalry, who died from a punctured skull December 28, 1875. A coroner's jury determined the cause of death but failed to determine the person responsible. *Sidney Telegraph*, January 1, 1876.

45. On June 25, 1876, Lieutenant Colonel George A. Custer's command of five companies of 7th Cavalry were defeated by the largest assemblage of hostile Indians ever. The command was entirely wiped out in the most famous battle of the Indian Wars.

46. Fort Russell was established in 1867 for the protection of railroad workers and the new town of Cheyenne. Prucha, 184.

47. After Custer's defeat General Crook's command spent three months pursuing the hostiles. They destroyed one village at the Slim Buttes in northwestern South Dakota. Because of the hardships encountered and lack of provisions, the campaign became known as the "Starvation March."

48. William Sherman was commanding general of the US Army. Heitman, 882. Philip Sheridan was the commanding general of the Division of the Missouri, with headquarters in Chicago. Heitman, 881.

49. 1st Lieutenant William B. Pease, Company D, 9th Infantry, was ordered to Sidney Barracks to serve out the unexpired portion of a General Court Martial sentence dated October 1, 1876. Post Returns, Fort Sidney, October, 1876.

50. As the commander of the Department of Arizona, Crook in 1872-1873 brought about the surrender of groups of Yavapai and Apache in Arizona. This success gained him promotion to brigadier general.

51. In November and December, the staff and band plus Company H of the 9th Infantry and Companies D and K, 5th Cavalry, replaced the two companies of 23rd Infantry as the garrison of Sidney Barracks. Post Returns, Fort Sidney, November & December, 1876.

52. P. Rumsey & Son had been the proprietors of the "Sidney House," just east of the railroad depot, since 1875.

53. Private Joseph Keith, Company C, 5th Cavalry, was shot and killed in Joe Lane's dance hall by David Riley on January 13, 1877. Riley later became known as Doc Middleton, outlaw.

54. Spotted Tail left his agency February 10, 1877, to convince the Indians to surrender. By May 6 Crazy Horse and most of the hostiles had surrendered.

55. The hospital steward was a non-commissioned officer of the Medical Department who assisted the post surgeon in running the hospital. The January 27, 1877, *Sidney Telegraph* described the accident.

56. Frank R. Millspaugh, dean of Trinity Church, Omaha, conducted morning and evening services in the Sidney High School building. *Sidney Telegraph*, February 3, 1877.

57. Dr. Winne voluntarily resigned his commission in 1873, and for some time after reentering the service, he attempted to have his resignation revoked so as not to lose his previous service time promotions. Winne, however, was unsuccessful.

58. Private George Hunt, Company D, 5th Cavalry, died February 16 of a gunshot wound received in Sidney on the 15th. Medical Papers, Fort Sidney, February, 1877.

59. Frank North and his battalion of Pawnee Scouts arrived at the post in October, 1876, for service in the winter campaign. A war dance was held to celebrate the success of the campaign. *Sidney Telegraph*, March 10, 1877.

60. The Reverend Gerhart of North Platte. *Sidney Telegraph*, March 17, 1877.

61. The only mention of smallpox in the Sidney paper is that there were 38 cases in Cheyenne. *Sidney Telegraph*, March 17, 1877.

62. She refers to Conrad Zimmer, proprietor of the Sidney Produce Store. *Sidney Telegraph*, March 24, 1877.

63. In Crook's winter expedition of 1876, a large Cheyenne village was destroyed on the Red Fork of the Powder River in Wyoming. The Pawnee Scouts participated in the fight.

64. Frank North was the organizer of a battalion of Pawnee Indians known as the Pawnee Scouts, who periodically were mustered into service against the Sioux between 1866 and 1876. They were finally mustered out of service at Sidney Barracks in May of 1877.

65. Major George Gordon, 5th Cavalry. Heitman, 465.

66. A large number of people witnessed the mock battle which was held just north and east of the post. Private Ebener of Company B was the soldier injured. *Sidney Telegraph*, April 14, 1877.

67. Because of the failure of Congress to pass a pay appropriation, the Army received no pay after June 30, 1877. A special session finally passed the bill on November 17, 1877. Robert Utley, *Frontier Regulars, The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1890*, 62-63.

68. Captain Henry Wessells, commanding Company H, 3rd Cavalry, was ordered to Camp Robinson. Post Returns, Fort Sidney, May, 1877. Heitman, 1019.

69. Democrats in Congress attempted to pass an appropriation bill in 1877 reducing the size of the Army to 17,000 enlisted men from the 25,000 then in service. Utley, 62.

70. Hospital Steward Henry Bernard died suddenly June 14 of "congestion of the brain." The *Sidney Telegraph* incorrectly reported the cause of death to be an overdose of morphine. Medical Papers, Fort Sidney, June, 1877.

71. Assistant Surgeon Egon Anthony Koerper was the post surgeon at Camp Sheridan near the Spotted Tail Agency. Heitman, 608.

72. Camp Brown was established in 1871 near the confluence of the Little Wind River and the North Fork of the Wind River in Central Wyoming to protect the Shoshoni Indians from the Sioux and Arapaho. The name was changed to Fort Washakie in 1878. Prucha, 187.

73. Captain Albert Woodson was the commanding officer of Company K, 5th Cavalry. Heitman, 1059.

74. Captain Samuel S. Sumner was the commanding officer of Company D, 5th Cavalry. Heitman, 936.

75. In the summer of 1877 some 800 Nez Perce under Chief Joseph left their reservation in Idaho and made a 1,700-mile march in a bid for freedom that has become an epic of Indian history. Traveling across mountainous terrain and pursued by Army units, the Nez Perce outwitted and outfought the Army until Joseph was compelled to surrender October 5.

76. Company I, 9th Infantry, arrived at the post from Omaha Barracks. Post Returns, Fort Sidney, August, 1877.

77. Crazy Horse was bayoneted by a soldier during a scuffle while at the guardhouse at Camp Robinson. He died on September 5, 1877.

78. The Winnes were expecting a baby that fall.

79. Fort McPherson was built in 1863 11 miles below the confluence of the North and South Platte Rivers to protect travelers from Indian attacks. Prucha, 88.

80. Assistant Surgeon Curtis Emerson Munn previously was the post surgeon at Camp Robinson. Heitman, 736.

81. Camp Robinson was established March 8, 1874, north of the White River near its confluence with Soldier Creek for the control of Indians at the Red Cloud Agency. Prucha, 90.

82. The Winnes traveled from Sidney to North Platte by railroad, then 17 miles southeast by ambulance to the post.

83. Lieutenant Colonel Eugene Carr, 5th Cavalry. He held the brevet rank of brigadier general from service in the Civil War. Heitman, 285.

84. Company L, 5th Cavalry, and Companies A and F, 9th Infantry, making a garrison of 121 enlisted men and nine officers. Post Returns, Fort McPherson, November, 1877.

85. Assistant Surgeon Joseph Ruff Gibson. Heitman, 454.

86. Camp Sheridan was established in the spring of 1874 near the Spotted Tail Agency.

87. Fort McPherson was built on the Overland Trail on the south side of the Platte River. The Union Pacific Railroad ran on the north side, 4 miles north of the post.